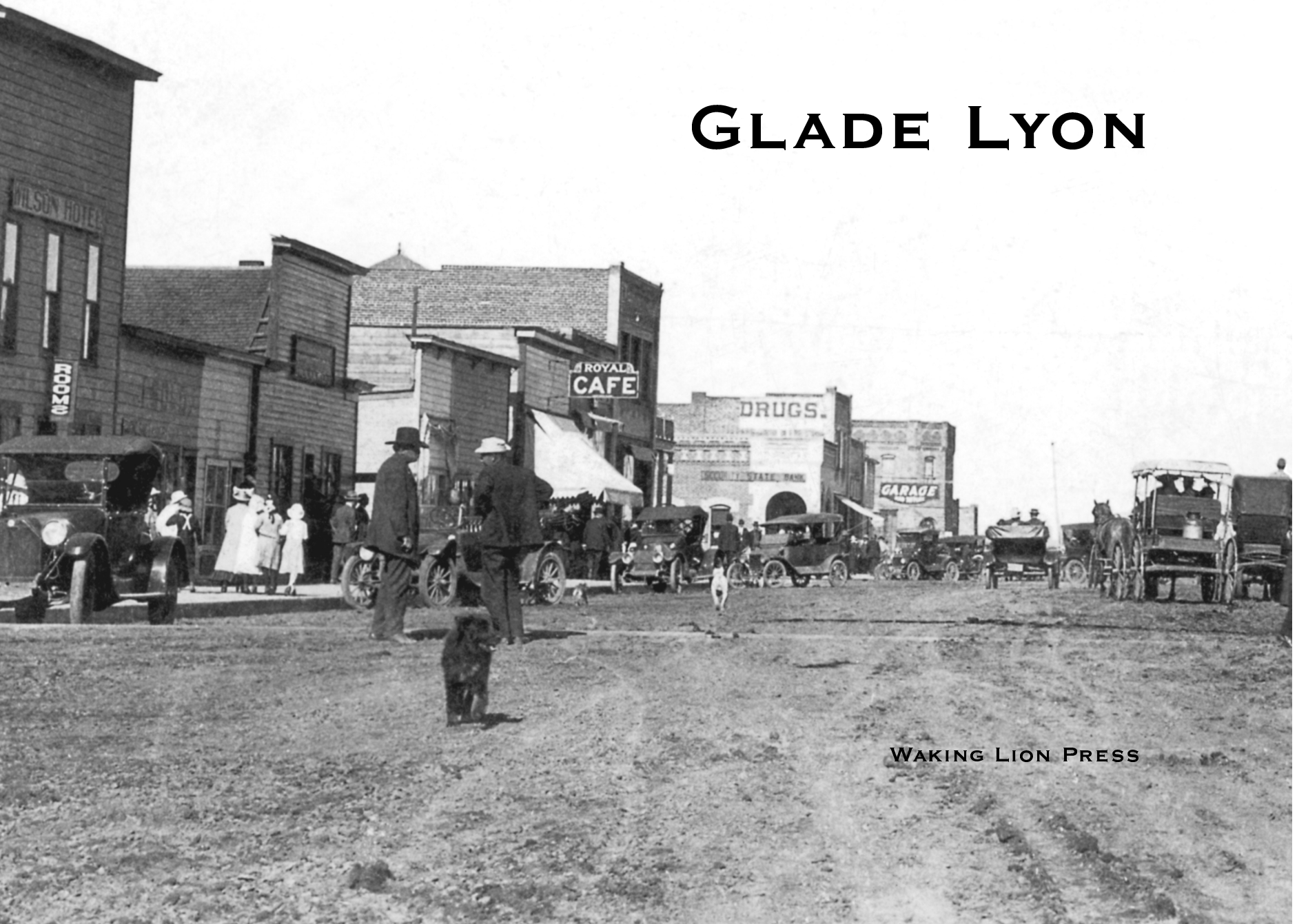


# ASHTON, IDAHO



# GLADE LYON

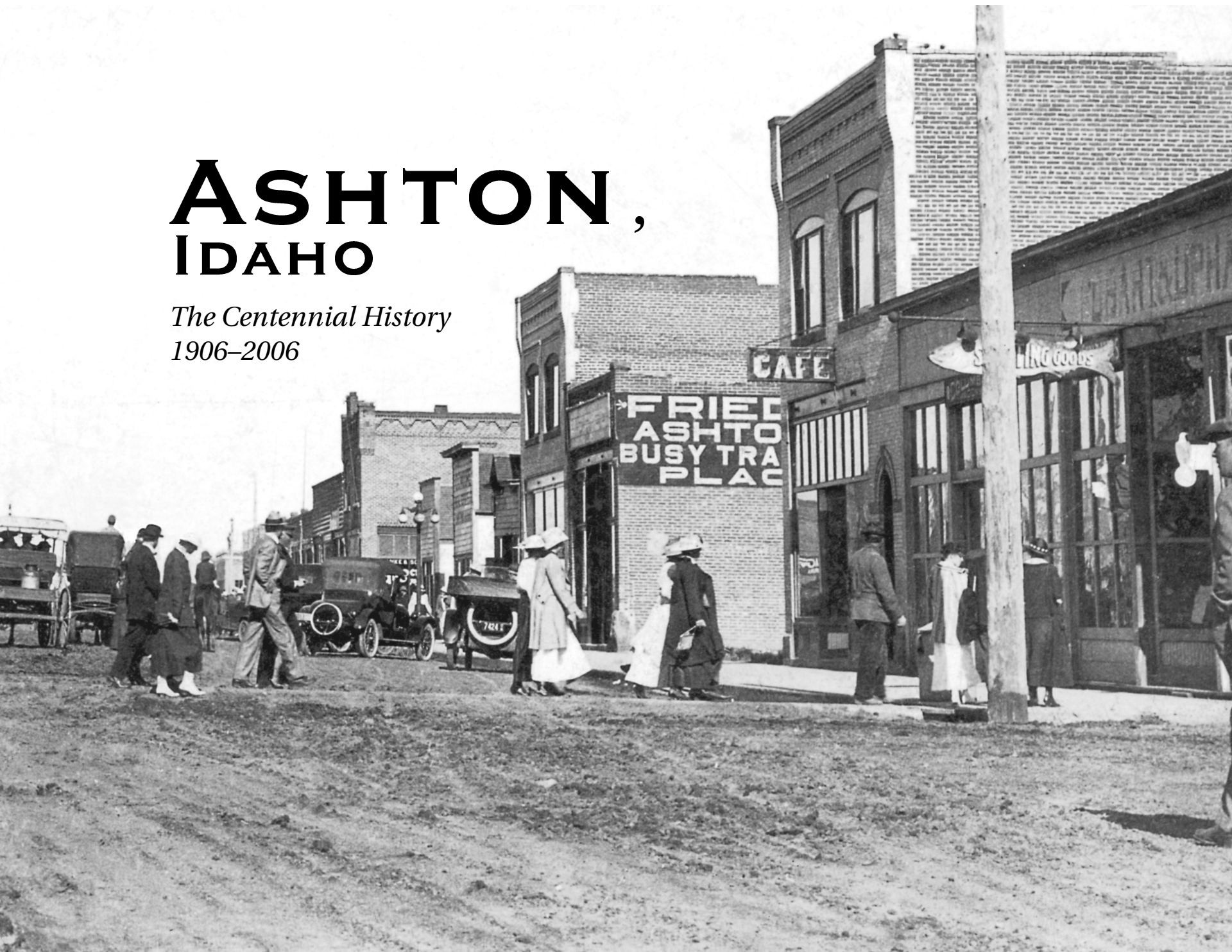


WAKING LION PRESS



# ASHTON, IDAHO

*The Centennial History*  
1906–2006



This account of the first one hundred years of Ashton, Idaho, and surrounding communities is dedicated to those intrepid immigrants who left their homes in the eastern United States, Europe, or elsewhere to search for a better place to live and found it in 1906 in the beauty of what is now Fremont County.

*Previous page: Ashton's bustling main street (looking east), about 1917. The building under the "E" in "Glade" is the Odd Fellows Building. The building under the "H" in "Ashton" is the Cannon Building, which is no longer standing but most recently housed the Ashton IGA store.*

The views expressed in this book are the responsibility of the author and do not necessarily represent the position of The Editorium. The reader alone is responsible for the use of any ideas or information provided by this book, which may contain errors, omissions, and discrepancies. The author did the best he could with the information available.

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## FOREWORD

I would not have taken on this job for just anyone. When the Ashton Centennial Committee was looking for volunteers to write a book about Ashton's history over a year ago, I firmly declined. I knew it would be a time-consuming ordeal, and I wanted no part of it.

My father, Glade Lyon, on the other hand, was perfect for it. As a retired octogenarian who loved to red-line newspaper articles and send them back to the editor, and with a sharp mind for historical detail and stories, he took on the task with gusto. Even as his physical health failed, he worked on the book daily. Or I should say nightly. He always said the two hardest things to do in life were going to bed and getting up. He liked to work on his computer until two or three nearly every morning, writing, reading, pondering, and making notes to himself. He died early in the morning of October 10, 2005, sitting at his computer, writing this book.

I have been a bit upset with him ever since. Suddenly I got the job of finishing this book by default. I inherited a bramble of scribbblings and partially finished chapters, and a pile of papers and books that I'm sure he borrowed from someone. My brother, Jack, is a publisher by trade and said he could handle that part of it, but after all, I am an English teacher; I should be able to whip out this book in no time.

This book was a labor of love to my dad. To me it was just labor, but I did it because I love my dad. In spite of good intentions, the information is incomplete and, at times, possibly incorrect. I know there are holes; I just hope people don't hurt themselves when they fall into one.

*Suzanne Hamilton  
Glade's oldest daughter*



## PREFACE

Many of the names, dates, and locations given in this book are unable to be verified. That is, different sources and reference books sometimes give different dates for the same event, names are sometimes spelled in different ways, and the location of some businesses is unknown. Where a discrepancy has been found, the most likely, in the view of the author, has been used. As reporter Bob Woodward once said, this is “the best obtainable version of the truth.” Much information about Ashton’s history is simply unavailable.

I have used my best efforts in collecting and preparing the information published herein. However, I do not assume, and hereby disclaim, any and all liability for any loss, damage, or offense caused by errors, omissions, or inclusions, whether such errors, omissions, or

inclusions resulted from negligence, accident, or other causes.

*Glade Lyon*

[Publisher’s note: This book started as a sort of “walk down Ashton’s Main Street,” with a history of the businesses that had occupied each building, but it quickly expanded to include much more information. The book was left unfinished at the death of Glade Lyon on October 10, 2005. His children Jack Lyon and Suzanne Hamilton have done their best to complete the project, with invaluable help from Neal Wickham and Jane Daniels, who deserve special mention and thanks.]





## LIFE BEFORE ASHTON: 1905

This is the way life was the year before Ashton began:  
The average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years.  
Only 14 percent of the homes in the U.S. had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

There were only 8,000 cars in the U.S., and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 miles per hour.

The average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents an hour.

The average U.S. worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.

A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

Ninety percent of all U.S. physicians had no college education. Instead, they attended medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press and by the government as “substandard.”

Sugar cost 4 cents a pound.

Eggs were 14 cents a dozen.

Coffee was 15 cents a pound.

The American flag had 45 stars.

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented.

Two of 10 U.S. adults couldn't read or write.

Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at corner drugstores. According to one pharmacist, “Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health.”

Eighteen percent of households in the U.S. had at least one full-time servant or domestic.

There were only about 230 reported murders in the entire U.S.



## *Chapter 1*

### **IN THE BEGINNING**

Ashton's beginnings can be traced to the Homestead Act, passed by Congress May 20, 1862, and signed into law by Abraham Lincoln. The act provided for "any citizen of the U.S. who was the head of the family or over 21 years of age to file on 160 acres of unappropriated land and to acquire title to the same, by residing upon and cultivating it for five years and by paying such fee as was necessary for administration." "Proving up on the homestead" was a common term used by those meeting the requirements and getting title to land.

Although land came free to the settlers, much labor was still required to establish homes, farms, and eventually communities. There were no roads or bridges—only the tall sagebrush. To clear the land, horses were hitched to large chains, and these were pulled through

the sage. Then hand hoeing was required to clean up the remaining vegetation. The ground had to be plowed twice to prepare the soil for planting. The grain was broadcast by hand and harrowed in with harrows made from poles. As fast as the land was cleared, canals and ditches were dug to bring water. Wheat, barley, oats and corn were the first small grain crops planted. Every farm needed these grains at home for food for themselves and their livestock.

Threshing machines were costly, so farmers joined forces to acquire them. Several farmers united teams and equipment, going from farm to farm to complete each harvest in one operation. This group became known as the "threshers," and their annual coming was a big occasion. The women prepared large feasts for

## *In the Beginning*

them, supplying three meals plus treats throughout the day, as they started early and worked long after dark.

### **Earliest Settlements**

Early settlers came to the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, north of Fall River, establishing settlements and communities around what would later be Ashton. There were at least 20 of them: Drummond, Farnum, Franz, Grainville, Greentimber, Harris, Highland, Horseshoe Flats, Hugginsville (Svea Falls), Lamont, Lillian, Lodi, Marysville, New Hope, Ora, Rice, Sarilda, Sand Creek, Upper Sand Creek, and Vernon. The first settlers were Joe and Mary Weaver Baker and their children, who came in 1889 to the springs—still called Baker Springs—about a mile north of Ashton. Mary was the postmistress and had the post office in her home until Marysville was started and the post office was moved there, but with Mary still as postmistress.

The first post-office building in the area was built at Lodi by John L. Dorcheus at Dorcheus Springs, about a mile and a quarter north and a quarter-mile west of present-day Ashton, with Mary Dorcheus, who came in 1893, as postmistress. Ed Dorcheus, Mary's father, bought the homestead of Mr. Shepard, and the post office and a four-room school building were built there at Lodi. Mr. Shepard taught at Lodi in the winter and Sarilda in the summer. Mail was delivered from Market Lake to St. Anthony in 1906 and on to Lodi.



*Mary Weaver Baker, looking decidedly unhappy about having her picture taken. The dress, jewelry, and corsage indicate that she had dressed in her finest for what was probably a special occasion.*



---

Food was scarce, but Joe Baker's daughter Maude said, "There was plenty of wild game and good fishing for fish so fat they fried themselves."

---

## **Canals**

The first immigrants immediately realized the need for water to irrigate their crops and began digging canals as soon as possible. Digging those canals with horse-drawn slip scrapers was extremely difficult and sometimes required the use of dynamite or black powder to get through the lava rock. In some cases, hammers and chisels were used to cut away the banks, with "blood, sweat, and tears." They hauled their culinary water in 50-gallon drums on a wagon. The problems they encountered are almost beyond comprehension today.

The Brady Canal was started in 1889 by James H. Brady under the Carey Act, which Congress passed in 1894. When he was elected governor of Idaho in 1908, he sold his interest, and the name was changed to The Marysville Irrigation Canal, sometimes known as the Marysville Canal and Improvement Co., Limited.

The Farmers Own Ditch Company was incorporated in March 1896. The most difficult part was building the 7-foot-high, 154-foot-wide dam just above the Kirkham

Bridge on Fall River. The first three miles of the canal were hewn out of rock and a hard cement formation with picks and shovels, hand drilling, and blasting. Water first reached the lower end of the south lateral in 1902.

The Yellowstone Canal's first filing was in 1904 and was designed to take the water from Fall River just below the mouth of Boone Creek. Gottfried Reimann took the contract and was paid \$1.50 per day for a man and a horse, half in cash and half in stock.

In 1898 the Green Timber Ditch was started with the head at Sheep Falls on Fall River. The farmers had disagreements, so they split up, and the Yellowstone Power & Irrigation, Ltd. was formed in 1902. The ditch was completed in 1907 but usually had only a small stream of water. It was reorganized in 1938.

The Conant Creek Canal was laid out in 1896 for Horseshoe Flats, later known as Mountain Dell. They originally planned to build a canal ten feet wide and three feet deep, so they filed on 30 feet of water, not realizing what a small amount that was, but then lost their opportunity to increase that filing. The water was taken from Conant Creek beginning at the area designated Henry's Camp from the rocks found there with the names of Captain Henry and his party chiseled into them. Workers were paid \$2.50 for a man and a team for ten hours, but there was no money, so payment was taken in stock in the canal company. Water was first

## *In the Beginning*

turned into the ditch in 1903. There was always a camp of men and women to cook for them, and Tom and Brig Murdoch held pleasant evenings around the campfire with stories, songs, and music with their fiddle and guitar.

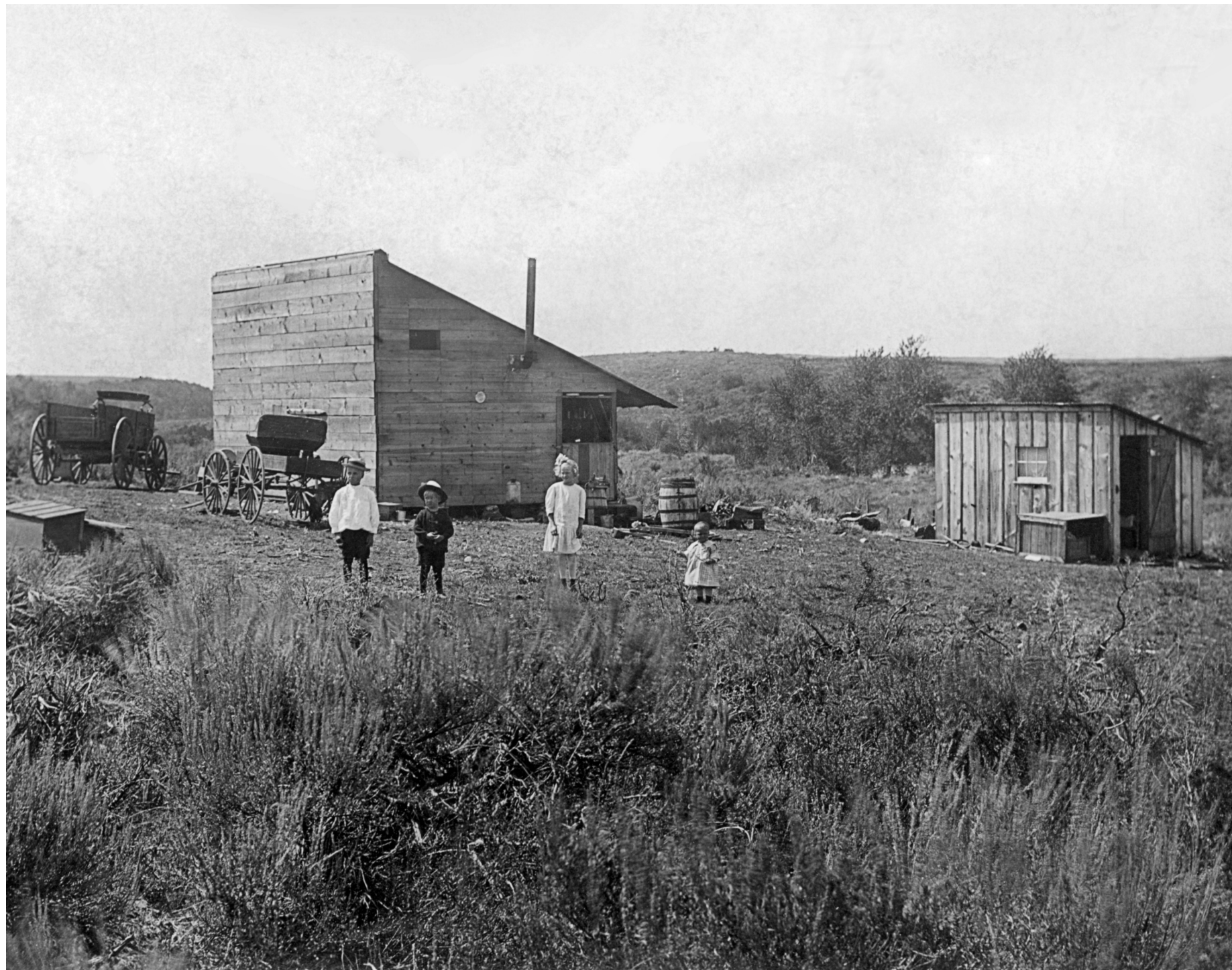
The first survey of possible railroad routes into the area now known as Ashton was in 1881 and was followed by settlers looking for good, fertile ground to homestead or just a new place to live. Many of them found just what they were looking for in the area north of Fall River and south of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. One early immigrant, Acil S. Hawkes, described it as a prairie of waving grass where frequent fires would kill out the shrubbery and sagebrush, and the grass would then grow very quickly and to a considerable height. It was a beautiful place and an ideal range for stock. The snow seemed to drift more than it did in later years and would stay in drifts until late in the summer. There was an abundance of game of all kinds. Elk, deer, and antelope were often seen in herds. Some of the settlers bought land and were able to pay their debt off after their first year because of the bumper crops grown in the rich virgin soil.

## **The Founding of Ashton**

According to historian Thornton Waite of Idaho Falls, 640 acres of land were purchased in 1904 for about \$40 per acre for the townsite of Ashton from

George Harrigfeld, J. E. McGavin, and Asa Hendricks by the Ashton Townsite Co., which consisted of 13 men. Most of the men were residents of nearby St. Anthony and included C. C. Moore and H. G. Fuller. They were instrumental in creating the township, which was begun February 14, 1906, when the first train stopped at the Ashton depot. Fremont County records give the actual date of incorporation as July 11, 1906.

*Next page. Handwriting on the photo side of this RPPC (Real Photo Post Card) reads, "on the homestead in Idaho 1911." The postcard was purchased on eBay with four other RPPCs of the Ashton area, so all five came from the same source. One was addressed to Council Bluffs, Iowa, with an Ashton postmark of 11-6-1914. Most of the writing on the postcards is in Norwegian, and there are similar handwritten comments on the other RPPCs about the sender's life. However, since the photos are RPPCs, they are not photos of the actual sender's life, and the comments were probably made in jest. These five RPPCs were probably purchased in Ashton just before being mailed to relatives, since they depict scenes in the Ashton Area. The photo appears to have been taken in one of the watered canyons near Ashton, such as Fall River or Conant Creek or even the Henry's Fork. Comments on other photos indicate that the senders lived west of Ashton. The Upper Snake River Valley was rapidly homesteaded, and homesteading was mostly complete by the mid 1890s. The well-watered canyons were surely some of the first areas to be settled. This photo, judging from the sage, pines, and flat-bottomed canyon, is almost certainly in the Ashton area but is likely to have been taken in the mid to late 1890s. Whether the photo was taken in 1895 or in 1911, it definitely depicts a typical homestead in the Ashton area.*



## *In the Beginning*

A newspaper dated January 3, 1906, reported that the details were completed for filing the articles of incorporation of the Ashton Townsite Company. The following were elected: Wm. Vanderveer, Pres., Geo. N. Swartz, Vice Pres., Lee S. Borrows, treasurer, Hiram. G. Fuller, secretary, and other directors, including, C. C. Moore, C. P. Bartlett, and Wood D. Parker. Wm. Vanderveer died and was eulogized at the Fourth of July celebration in 1906. The first council was elected in 1906 with H. L. Cannon chairman, and H. G. Fuller, Jos. Murphy, M. Crouch, and Joe Mosser as board members. A meeting was held March 10, 1908, to choose the location of the new town.

---

James Fuller invented the slogan "Keep your eye on Ashton" in July, 1906. Another slogan heard at that time was "Watch Ashton Grow."

---

A letter dated 1956 from Mrs. Heber Hartvigsen, wife of Ashton's first newspaperman, contained the following information: The south side of Main Street, part of Ashton Townsite, was deeded from the State of Idaho in 1900 to Chris and George Harrigfeld. There was also a part that had been homesteaded by James E. McGavin, patent granted in 1905, and sold to Moore and Fuller. The Harrigfelds' land was deeded to G. E. Bowerman in 1905 and later to Ashton Townsite Co. Horace Baker

owned the north side of Main Street. He acquired it from his parents, who had homesteaded the land.

---

Two of the people signing over their land were unable to write, but their "X" was duly witnessed.

---

Louis Maurer mapped out the streets and alleys and made the original survey of Ashton. W. J. King surveyed the sections for the townsite of Ashton and named the streets. Roy Drollinger is reported to have built the first house in Ashton. He was a chain man for the surveyors laying out Main Street in Ashton.

---

The U.S. Census shows the population of Ashton as follows:

1910: 502  
1920: 1,445  
1930: 1,348  
1940: 1,203  
1950: 1,256  
1960: 1,242  
1970: 1,187  
1980: 1,126  
1990: 1,113  
2000: 1,129

---



# Hotel Ashton

Steam Heat Thruout

W. J. Haack, Proprietor

ASHTON : IDAHO

FARMERS  
HOMESEEKERS  
INVESTORS  
SPORTSMEN

KEEP YOUR



ON ASHTON



Miss Ruth Brishin  
317 Beach House  
American  
Luna Beach  
Cal.

Postcard from the Ashton Hotel, postmarked in Ashton in 1912.

## *In the Beginning*

### **The Railroad**

William Ashton, chief engineer of the Oregon Short Line Railroad, surveyed the railroad line through the Ashton area and named the town after himself.

The track-laying gangs, totaling as many as 1800 men, were mostly Chinese and Japanese (six railroad cars under Pat Feeney) and Greeks (ten railroad cars under Chris Carson). They were paid two dollars for a twelve-hour day. Johnny Christofferson cooked for the blasting crews.

The first train to stop at the Ashton depot site was on February 14, 1906. There was a huge celebration that included the opening of the Millers Bros. Elevator. Special trains brought in hundreds of people who helped celebrate with a non-stop dance and free refreshments furnished by the local bars.

The Oregon Short Line began regular daily service to Ashton on March 29, 1906. In July 1906 the original tar-paper depot was torn down and a new depot built 1.7 miles to the north at the site of Ashton. The new 24-by-40-foot Railroad depot was completed in 1907 and extended in 1921. In 1907 they built a section house, a bunkhouse, and three tool houses. In 1914 the railroad added a 14-by-24-foot freight house, a wooden water

tank 24 feet in diameter by 16 feet high, a coaling station 24 feet in diameter and 19 feet high, a four-stall brick engine house 86 feet long, a 16-by-34-foot round house, a 13-by-42-foot sand house, and a 24-by-40-foot power house.

R. D. "Bob" Jennings was reported to be the first station agent. He was probably followed by R. T. Drollinger. In May 1906, Mr. Council was the Relief Agent. He was followed by agents Star Willis, John T. (Jack) Lyon in 1938, Ben Meese, Pard Dallas, Harvey P. Green, R. J. Davids, Darrell Waters, and LaMar Jones, who officially closed the office in 1992. John Christofferson handled the Railway Express for many years.

---

On May 25, 1906, six Japanese workers who were dynamiting fish in the Snake River near Warm River tried to evade the Idaho State Fish and Game wardens by crossing the Snake River. Three of them, H. Ishii, S. Makita, and S. Matsu, were drowned. Two were buried in the southwest corner of the Pineview Cemetery, but the body of one was never recovered. The other three were apprehended. There was quite a controversy as to whether or not they should be punished for merely trying to get food. Their fate is unknown.

---



*Whooping it up at the round house, about 1910.*

## *Chapter 2*

### **BUSINESSES**

#### **The Early Days**

The first business building in Ashton was the office of Moore and Fuller on the south side of the 500 block of Main Street in business on February 22, 1906. Charles C. Moore and Hiram G. “Fess” Fuller, two of Ashton’s founders, built a small frame building known as “The Old Townsite Building” and were operating a real-estate business and an insurance business there in February 1906. It was they who first platted the town and then sold lots to anyone who would buy. They were the sole agents for the sale of lots in the City of Ashton.

Moore and Fuller sold all the lots along Main Street as fast as they could, and the purchasers of those one 190 lots are shown in the county records, but oftentimes the way they were used or what was built on

them is not known. There were a number of early entrepreneurs in Ashton. Harry Cannon ran one of the first stores, as did Dick and Dan Thomas. Hugh Perham built many of the first buildings. Bennie Woods opened the first restaurant. Burrell and Stone had a dry-goods establishment. J. A. Fulleton purchased a lot for a blacksmith forge to open about March 1906. Also at that time, Chris Anderson bought another lot to enlarge his proposed building next to Fogg and Jacobs Lumber Co., and Amos W. Neeley bought property on Main for a drug business. The first builder in town was possibly Hugh Perham.

Harry Cannon built a drug store near the Moore and Fuller office. He was not a pharmacist, so Dr. E. L. Hargis filled prescriptions. Harry did a booming business

in hard liquors. Ole A. Brothen, a pharmacist, came to work for Cannon and then bought the business, which he continued until the arrival of Gus Isenburg, who operated a drug store.

Grant Lamport made arrangements for Peter Wilson to build a butcher shop. Peter Wilson was completing his boarding house on April 12, 1906. Local farmers formed Peoples' Saw Mill Co. in 1906 with J. T. Dorcheus, H. R. Cunningham, and Peter Wilson planning to start work in the spring.

---

Johnny Sack, a short but colorful fellow famous for building the Johnny Sack cabin at Big Springs, was employed as a butcher at Stevens' meat market in Ashton when he first arrived in 1909. He originally homesteaded in Island Park and built in 1914. He built his custom home at Big Springs in 1929. Tourists can still tour it. He died in 1957.

---

The Ashton Boarding House, operated by Wm. Zimmerman, proprietor; Bennie Woods; and a cook named Zimmerman also featured an early restaurant. They advertised meals at all hours and claimed that "if the best way to reach a man is through his stomach, come in, and we will reach you."

Pete Wilson started a lodging house in April 1906. Wilson Lodging House had 20 rooms but would allow customers to sleep on the floor if the beds were full.

Murphy and Bartlett had a saloon that opened in April 1906. They installed a Chickering piano in their buffet with Professor Smith at the ivories. Another early saloon was built by Dick Humphrey.

In July 1906 the Parker Livestock Commission put a new brick front on their building. O. M. Van Tassel opened a general merchandise store just east of the Parker Livestock Building.

In 1910, only four years after its incorporation, the Ashton Business Directory listed the following:

Ashton State Bank, F. X. Dolenty, Cashier.

Security State Bank, W. L. Robinson, Cashier.

The Ashton Grocery, J. E. Davis, Prop.

The Cheap Cash Store, F. Freed, Prop.

The Keller Implement Co., J. F. Hobart, Mgr.

Ashton Lumber and Hardware Co., R. H. Manning, Mgr.

J. C. Robertson and co., J. C. Robertson, Mgr.

Studebaker Bros. R. C. Kirkbride, Mgr.

St. Anthony Building and Mfg. Co., Abner Widdison, Mgr.

The Ashton Lumber Co., R. H. Manning, Mgr.

The Ashton Cafe and Commercial Rooms, Thos. George, Prop.

Boarding House, Mrs. J. E. Davis and Mrs. Wm. Zimmerman, Props.

The Ashton Rooming House, Mrs. Victoria Peterson, Prop.

## *Businesses*

Livery Stable, C. Nordvall; Livery Stable, F. Hulse.  
R. Marquardt, Jeweler; J. F. Wendell, Jeweler and Photographer.  
The Ashton Plumbing and Electric Supply Co., Freeman Humes, Mgr.  
E. M. Varin, Plumber.  
Dr. E. L. Hargis, Physician.  
The Ashton Sanitarium, Dr. E. L. Hargis, Prop.  
The Teton Pharmacy, Hoff and Brothen, Props.  
Dr. T. P. Carnes, D.D.S.  
Mrs. Alice Fosgreen, Milliner.  
The Ashton Enterprise, H. H. Hartvigsen, Editor and Prop.  
Blacksmith, Theodore Smith, C. L. Wessel, and J. Judkins.  
The Independent Telephone Co., R. Marquardt, Mgr.  
The Bell Telephone Co., McKinley, Mgr.  
The Chase Furniture Co., W. T. Gibson, Mf.  
Stephens and Stephens, meat.  
Electric Theater, Swanstrum, Humes, and Co., Props.  
The Ashton Commercial Club, E. S. McCormick, Sec., W. L. Robinson, Treas.  
The Ashton Commercial Club Library and Free Reading Room, E. S. McCormick, Mgr.  
The Municipal Electric Light Plant; The Municipal Water Works; Wm. Locke and J. M. Anderson, Contractors.

Frank Jondahl, Painter.  
Sheffield and Long Harness and Shoe Repair.  
Woods Brothers, Barbers.  
T. M. Toohey, Barber.  
Woods Bros, Pool and Billiards.  
H. C. Graves, Real Estate.  
Moore and Fuller, Real Estate.  
Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Mark White, Pastor.  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, H. B. Cunningham, Bishop.  
F. A. Wilkie, Civil Engineer.  
Ashton Public School, E. S. McCormick, Supt.  
Ads in copies of the *Ashton Herald* from 1953 showed Fremont Coop, City Drug, Zundel Jewelry, Chevrolet Garage, Ashton Motor (Jack Swager), Rexall Drug (Klamt), Variety Store, Ess-Jay's (Story and Meese, mgrs.), Davis Motel, Western Auto (O. E. Rich), City Cleaners, (Leo Hammond), Utoco Service (Tony Maupin), Hart's Service, Coast to Coast (Neil Barkus), Chuck Wagon, Harris Mercantile, O. P. Skaggs, and the *Ashton Herald*.  
*Ashton Herald* ads from 1956 included City Drug, Jardine Jewelry (newcomer Grant Jardine), City Market (Tom Murdoch), Wynn's Hardware and Furniture, Tom's Chevron Station, Neifert Hotel (since 1932), Kiser Funeral Home (Lewis Kiser), Keith deStwolinski, Garrett Freightlines, Fall River Electric (since 1938), Robert

Timmons Implement Co., Earl Equipment Co., Log Cabin Court (Dick Hummel), Rankin Motel and Hamburger Haven (D. K. Rankin), Texaco Court (Jon Hoch), Lone Pine Motel (Nell Burrell), Davis Motel (Lorenzo Davis), Hummel Motel (Jack Swager), Jack Harker (bulk Utoco), Boise Payette Lumber Co., Rodney Gifford and Paul Winger potato brokers, Stewart Agency, Ashton Theater, Union Pacific Railroad Co., Waugh's Blacksmith (Claud Waugh), Clark's Barbershop (Jess and Dick Clark), Bear Gulch Ski Basin, Ashton Farm Bureau, Tony's Utoco (Tony Maupin), L. B. Lindsley Machine Shop (Drummond), Joe Reiman (licensed electrical contractor), Murray Baum Produce, Lyon's (Glade Lyon), Fremont Co-op Supply, Coast to Coast Stores (Bud Trussell), Ashton Variety (Alyce Brady), Ott's Place, Reinke Grain Co., Globe Mills, Hemming Chevrolet Co. (Rulon & Eugene Hemming), Harris Supermarket, Yellowstone Grain Growers (Drummond), Lyd's Cafe, Howe Lumber Co. (Randall C. Howe), Burnt Bun (Mr. & Mrs. W. H. Ghormley), Thrift Store (Jack Rice), Ashton Theater (Harrigfelds), Imperial Club, O. P. Skaggs System Stores, Neal's Wescott Service, City Cleaners, Ray's Tire Shop (Ray McBride), Western Auto (Euzene & Gerald Rich), Midland Elevators, Squirrel Store (Floyd Grif-fel), The Kelley Hotel (Marysville), Leo's Barber Shop (Leo Cordon), Harvey Schwendiman (fertilizer), Ashton Texaco Service (south highway), Blanche's Cafe, Utah Power & Light (Howard Larson), Ashton Hydro Plant

(Fred S. Cowley super.), Story & Meese, George Baum (Drummond bulk Texaco).

### **Landmark Buildings and Businesses on Ashton's Main Street**

Many of Ashton's first buildings are still standing, and many of them played important roles as the town matured. Other important structures have been built over the years as well. Using Fifth Street and Main Street as the hub of the town, we can examine some of Ashton's buildings and businesses.

#### **South Main Street**

##### *West of Fifth Street, South side of Main Street*

The service station kitty-corner across the street was bulldozed down in 1977 along with the drayage buildings to the south, and Valley Bank was built on that corner. It later sold to Key Bank, managed by Dean Hossner until he retired, and then by Linda Sheldon until 1992 when she went to Bank of Idaho. In 2001 Elgie Tucker became manager of Key Bank until she transferred to the Driggs branch and Donna Fisher took over. Bank of Idaho opened in Ashton in February 1997 on the southeast corner of sixth and Main, on the previous location of the Hemming Garage after it burned down. Blair Dance was manager until November 2002, when Linda Sheldon became manager.







NEW YORK  
HOTEL

TOURIST  
SUPPLIES  
FREE INFO

BULL

CROCERIES  
LEGUMES - CANNED

FRESH MILK  
BREAD BUTTER AND EGGS  
FRESH BREAD

ROYAL  
CAFE

GEN

RAINBOW  
CAFE

FISH TACKLE

## Businesses

Previous page: Ashton's Main Street (looking east) in 1930. Here, the sign has been removed from the top of the Cannon Building, which is now being used as the "New-York Hotel" and advertises "Tourists' Supplies" and "Free Information." The Royal Cafe, previously on the north side of the street, has moved across the street to the south. Note the new Hotel Ashton.

The **Old Townsite Building**, west of what is now Key Bank, was Accidentally destroyed in 1951 when Jim Harrell, who later became mayor of Ashton, attempted to move it—under cover of darkness because he did not have a moving permit. According to Jim, "It just fell apart." Moore and Fuller then built a new brick building on that same location and later sold it to Herbert S. Stewart, who in 1957 sold to Jim Harrell, who operated his real-estate and insurance businesses there with John McFarland, Darren Kerbs, and Glade Lyon as real-estate salesmen. Harrell sold the insurance business to Robert Fisher in 1986 but retained an office there, operating as Harrell Realty until 2005.

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Ashton's change from wooden sidewalks and unpaved streets came in 1911 to 1912.

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The next building west was the **Teton Pharmacy**, established in 1906 by McLally and Neely, on the south side of the 400 block on Ashton's Main Street on a site generally known as the **Dr. Krueger Building**. Dr. E. L.

Hargis owned the site for two days in 1908 and then sold it to A. O. (Ole) Brothen and Nills Hoff. Early Masonic meetings were held on the second floor of this building. It is now occupied by **Ashton Vet Clinic** and other businesses.

The **Wanke Building** housed a store, operated by a Mr. Fried, in the middle of the south side of the 400 Block. It was later a cafe, owned by Mr. Humphrey but run by Chinese workers. It was primarily to serve the approximately 1,800 Chinese, Japanese, and Greeks working on the railroad in the Ashton area. The cooking area partially burned, and a new floor was built over the debris. After Randall Howe, proprietor of **Howe Lumber Co.**, repaired the damage, he also built lumber storage sheds and later sold to Henry and Donna Griffel, owners of **HG Lumber and Hardware**, who demolished the store building and rebuilt, leaving a driveway between the Medical Building and their new store. They found Chinese cups and other artifacts among the debris in the space under the old floor. These artifacts may still be seen at HG Lumber and Hardware.

In the 1940s, the **Ashton Post Office** was housed in the Wanke Building with Felix Burgess as postmaster, who was followed by Thomas Hargis. **The Ashton Herald**, Carol Bessey, editor, was also housed in that building in the 1970s.

On the southwest corner of Fourth Street and Main Street was a lumber yard built and operated by E.

W. Lupton for Boise Payette Lumber Co. Then Merrill Evans owned it during the 1960s. It became Stronks Lumber, which sold to Anderson Lumber, and then the business was bought back by Theodore Stronks and later by Teddy Stronks, Ashton's current mayor.

*East of Fifth Street, South side of Main Street*

The **Cannon Building**, one of the first buildings in Ashton, was built in 1906 on the southeast corner of Fifth and Main by Harry L. Cannon and Charlie Berryman as a general merchandise store. It burned down in 1909 but was rebuilt to house the **Burrall and Stone Grocery and Dry Goods**. The Cannon Building was purchased in 1946 from C. L. Ashley by Otis Harris, who remodeled the second story into an apartment and two rental rooms and built the cinder-block "meat house" across the alley to the south for processing meat and renting out frozen-food storage lockers. The top floor of the building was the living quarters of the Harris family, and the other apartments and rooms were rented out. He later sold the business and buildings in 1964 to Jimmie Allison and Glade Lyon, who continued operating it as an **IGA Store**.

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A human fixture in the IGA was Thede Holbrook, the produce man, who always had a smile for everyone.

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Lyon sold his interest in the store to Allison in 1971, shortly before Allison was killed in a snowmobile race. Clair and Lynn Allison, Jimmie's brothers, ran the store until it burned to the ground in the 1980s. The meat house was purchased by Larry Hamilton for storage in the early 1980s, and at one time a portion of it was used by Dennis Jodoin, a seasonal forest-service employee, where he manufactured guitars and mandolins. It is now owned by Bob Comstock Sr. and used for storage and a workshop.

Next page. *The Cannon Building in Ashton Idaho at southeast corner of Fifth and Main. The monument at the top of the building reads "Cannon Block" and "1906." The photo has to be within a year or two of construction. There is a wood-frame building to the left (east) that has been torn down in a 1908 photo and replaced by a masonry building by about 1910. So this photo has to be before 1908. It was most likely taken just after construction in 1906 or 1907. On the Windows is "Men & Boys, Women's & Children's, Furnishings, Clothing," "H. L. Cannon & Co., Dry Goods and Groceries," and "Dentist" (upper window). This later became the "Burrall & Schroll" store and later the IGA store.*



The building located immediately east of the Cannon Building on the 500 block and commonly known as the **Imperial Club** may have been built by Harry Cannon around January 20, 1906. It has had many occupants, including a candy store run by Harold and Clara Strong, a clothing store, a hardware store, an implement shop, the **Humphries Cafe**, and a Spudnut (doughnuts made with potato flour) shop.

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The story is told that a local gentleman was forced to spend the night playing poker at the Imperial Club because of a sudden blizzard. He didn't report whether he won or lost.

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Elmer "Humpty" Duke started the Imperial Club in 1930. Cliff Moore managed it until 1942, when he began working for **Ott's Place**. Gambling was declared illegal by the State of Idaho about 1950, and the gambling tables were moved to the basement, which was accessible through a trap door at the south end of the building. The slot machines had to be disposed of. In 1942 Warren Cordingley became a partner to Elmer Duke and was manager for several years. About 1960 Walter "Vic" Phillips bought Duke's interest and managed it until the early 1970s, when he sold to Harry and Beverly Wade and Kenderson and Mary Rankin. Harry Wade passed away and in 1983, and Kenderson sold the business,

which he called "the love of my life," to Ken and Berretta Hanson. They later sold to Raymond Elliott.

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For many years, Wilbur Atchley made an annual St. Patrick's Day appearance in the Imperial Club on his green-painted mule.

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The history of the buildings east of the Imperial Club requires some speculation. The first building east of the Imperial Club may have been the **Paul Stone Grocery**. However, it is also thought that Murray Baum may have used the lot as a car dealership. In 1960, Fred Brady set his daughter Allyce up in **Ashton Variety Store** on that lot. It was used as a Sears mail-order store in the late 1970s and is now part of **Parts Service**. The building to the east of the variety store may have once been **Blanche's Cafe** and later a laundromat owned by Otis Harris and Don McCloud. It became **The Flower Barn** owned by Cheryl Lenz in the 1980s and, still later, an antique store operated by Doyle Phelps. After a brief stint as a day-care center, the building is currently empty.

In 1925 the business known as the **Teton Pharmacy** was moved to the south side of the center of the 500 block. In 1944, it was sold to Joe Klamt, who operated it as the **Rexall Pharmacy** with Roy Judd as manager and partner until 1967 when it was closed. This building became a **Gambles Store** owned by Albert Staub in the

## *Businesses*

1980s, and it later housed **Husky Pizza**, owned by Ron and Barb Atchley. It became **Annie's Bakery and Pizzeria**, owned by Ann and Trent Phelps, in the 1990s. For a short time it housed a business named **Box Canyon Outfitters**. It is currently vacant.

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Joseph D. "Joe" Klamt brought his family to Ashton in 1917 to join his Father, who had come two years earlier looking for work as a carpenter. He attended all four grades of high school in Ashton and graduated as valedictorian. He started working at the store in 1924.

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East of the Teton Pharmacy was a building owned by Morris Fried that was operated as a clothing store. Fried sold the store in 1929 to H. J. McCracken, who sold it to manager Enoch Hunt for **Hunt's Department Store**. Hunt always said, "I sell good goods." Hunt died in 1954. The store next became **Story and Jackson**, called "Ess-Jays" for short. Later it was purchased by Ben Meese and became **Story and Meese**; it was later taken over by Dick Pettit, Meese's son-in-law. In 1963 he sold it to Clair Chadwick, who started **Chadwick's Dress and Dry Goods** store. Mabel Phelps became manager in 1964 after being North Fremont High School secretary for 11 years. The business was then sold to Renee Stoddard, who had been a clerk there, and her husband Jim. They changed the name of the store to **Stoddard's**.

More recently it became the farm equipment and parts store of Jeff Jenkins. In the summer of 2006, the building became the **Arts Emporium** as part of Ashton's centennial celebration, run by Chan and Judith Atchley. Local artists and writers from around Ashton displayed and sold their work during a ten-day period in July.

Lawrence Stone built the **City Market Building**, known earlier as "The Red and White Store," near the center of the south side of the 500 block. He later sold it to George Stone, who then leased it to Tom Murdoch, who operated it for many years. Tom later bought the building next door to the east, which had been the site of **Freed's Ashton Cheap Cash Grocery**, and put in rental frozen-food lockers. The Freed Building was probably the site of the "duck pin" bowling alley, possibly owned by Carl Herre, that operated for a couple of years in the early 1940s.

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Every child could count on a free wiener from Uncle Tom when they came into his store

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Murdoch later closed his operation and became the butcher for the IGA store on the southwest corner of the block. His buildings may also have been the **Western Auto Store** owned and operated by Eugene Rich. They later became home to Alyce Brady's Ashton Variety Store in 1963 when she moved just a few doors

east of her earlier location. That store closed in 1981, and for several years the building served as the **Near-New Store**, a community store that survived on donations and raised money for the LDS building fund and other community causes. The building also housed the Ashton Public Library during the 1980s and later became home for the Ashton Senior Citizens' organization.

In July 1906, Dr. C.F.W. Marquardt bought property to construct the **Marquardt Jewelry Store Building** just west of Sixth and Main, next to the C.W. & M. He hired William Lalk to erect a building. His son, Rudolph Marquardt, hung a large clock-shaped sign in front of the business. At one time, Marquardt was granted permission to move his building into the middle of Main Street while constructing a new one.

The building had a succession of owners. Moore and Fuller acquired the building in 1908, Lee S. Borrows in 1911, and Charles C. Moore later in 1911. Ellen Marquardt purchased it in 1928, **Western Loan and Building** in 1934, Rudolph Marquardt in April 1935, and Carl Herre in May 1935. George P. Stone bought it in September 1935, Ida B. Stone in 1940, Chester French and Thomas Murdoch in 1944, J. D. Klamt in 1946, and again Thomas Murdoch later in 1946. Carl C. Herre and Frances Herre purchased it in 1957 from Harry Woodburn. Theodore O. Taylor operated **Taylor's Cleaners** there from 1953 until 1976.

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Ted Taylor came to Ashton with his family in 1909. He worked at Ashton Laundry and U S. Reclamation Service on Grassy Lake Dam. He was caretaker of Pineview Cemetery for several years and worked for ten years for Tri-State Lumber Co. After his retirement, he worked for the Senior Citizen Program of U.S. Forest Service from 1978 to 1984. He served as Ashton's fire chief for more than 30 years. He was also the first person from Ashton to be on the all-state football team.

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On the east corner of the south side of the 500 block was the **C. W. & M Building**, which housed the **Consolidated Wagon & Machine Store** managed by Wm. Smuin. It sold farm equipment, hardware, and other necessities. When it went out of business, the building was taken over by Con Peterson for a grocery store called **O. P. Skaggs**. After it burned in 1951 and was rebuilt, it had various owners and managers, including Jack Rice, J. C. Wangsgaard, Jack Coffin, DeVar Clark, Meredith Dexter, and Dennis Nichols. The C. W. & M. Building was vacant until it was opened in the early 2000s as a cafe, **Musher's Eatery**, by Michelle and Larry Lyford. That business was closed in 2005, and the building remains vacant.

The building on the southwest corner of the 600 block was a garage built by Humes and Swanstrum, which they operated as a Fordson Tractor dealership. Delbert Taylor purchased it as a Chevrolet dealership

## *Businesses*

about 1935, and in 1937 he sold the business to Darwin Taylor and Rulon Hemming. They operated a Chevrolet dealership there known as **Taylor and Hemming Chevrolet**. The business featured an office, a showroom, a parts room, rental spaces, and a mechanic's shop to the rear. Taylor and Hemming also owned a building on the east corner of the block that was used for a body shop. They often used the Opera House for storage space for their cars. There were two gasoline pumps out front where the gas was pumped by hand into glass containers calibrated into gallons on the top and then allowed to gravity flow into the customer's car for 25 cents a gallon. There was a hydraulic lift on the east side of the building. Rulon Hemming bought Darwin Taylor's share of the business in 1942 and operated it as Hemming Chevrolet Co. His son, Eugene Hemming, graduated from college about 1950 after returning from World War II and joined his father in the business. The building burned down about 1970, and in 1997 the Bank of Idaho purchased the lot and built a bank there.

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Someone, perhaps Rotary Club members, planted a small fir tree on that vacant corner and placed a whimsical sign there.

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The next lots, 5 and 6 east, were purchased in 1919 with the intention of building a new Lodge Hall. That never materialized, and the lots were later sold for a new post-office building occupied recently by Dr. Toenjes, a dentist, and currently by a new chiropractic center. An auto body repair shop owned by Darwin Hansen and later his son Darren follows next to the east.

Thelma Wilson opened **Thelma's Cafe** on Main Street between the city fire station and the Ashton Farm Equipment Co. in July 1954.

It is believed that John H. Hutchinson built a small cafe on the corner of Seventh and Main which was taken over before 1947 by Walter and Leora England,



teachers from Burley who lived in a trailer behind the cafe. The newly opened **Teacher's Inn** was a small building with no tables and only six stools at the counter. Katie Lyon and Joyce Clark were waitresses there in 1948.

Charlie Hartwig and his wife Leona purchased the business and named it "**Charlie's Cafe**," hiring Wanda Bates Hutchinson and Eva Calonge to work for them. Eva remembers dancing on the bar. Charlie was a large man and about 1960 helped push a car stuck in the snow; he had a heart attack and died. The property was sold to Fall River R.E.A., which added a warehouse and shop. Fall River moved to a new location south of town on Highway 20, and the property was acquired by the City of Ashton in about 1998 for the city offices and the Ashton Archives operated by Jane Daniels.

Ashton Health Services, Inc., built the **Ashton Medical Clinic**, designed by Dr. "Chris" Christensen, which had been constructed across the street to entice new doctors to come to the community. Ashton Health Services, Inc., was established in 1976 and dissolved in 1980. In 1979, 12 of the acute-care beds in the hospital were designated nursing-home beds. At the same time, the North Fremont Hospital Taxing District was formed to help both the hospital and the nursing home financially. There were many young doctors who came to Ashton to repay their debt to the federal government, incurred by their schooling, but none was willing

to stay. There was a great deal of friction between the Ashton Hospital Board of Directors and the Health Services Board of Directors concerning the duties and obligations of the new doctors. The problems of spiraling costs for health care, the lack of consistent physician coverage, and the difficulty of getting proper Medicare reimbursement finally led to the closing of the Hospital in 1988 and the change to a nursing home. It was so successful that a new nursing home was built at 700 North Second Street, and the old hospital building was used as a public storage facility.

The Ashton Medical Clinic is now in use as Ashton's primary medical care unit with Roxanna Holmes, P.A., as the main health provider.

### **North Main Street**

*West from Fifth Street, North side of Main Street*

The **Neifert Hotel Building** on the northwest corner of Main and Fifth streets started out as a lumber company. The Main Street lot and the lot behind it to the north were first purchased in June 1906 by **Snake River Lumber Co.**, J. F. Tricks, manager. They built a storeroom, office, and lumber sheds on the Main Street lot with J. F. Trick as manager, and probably used the rear lot for lumber storage. The business was sold to **Train Lumber and Coal Co.** in May 1912. They sold in

## *Businesses*

December 1915 to **Boise Payette Lumber Co.**, and then it was transferred to **Boise Payette, Inc.** in August 1936.

The **Ashton State Bank** moved to the original building on the Main Street corner in January 1912, and then the **First National Bank** with G. E. Bowerman as president in April 1913. The **U.S. Post Office Department** acquired the property in November 1917 and established the post office there. Then in 1928, Mrs. H. D. "Sally" Neifert" acquired the property, and in 1932 opened **Neifert's Hotel**, which was a landmark in Ashton for 40 years. Sally was brash and feisty but had a heart of gold. She often allowed transients to stay in the basement for free. "Banjo" Andy, so named because his right arm would not stay still, but said to be a violin virtuoso, was a regular who took care of the furnace in return for lodging.

Louis Smith and Hugh Hammond bought the Neifert Building in 1971 but did not move their plumbing business there until 1975. Later Louis moved, and the business became **Hammond Plumbing**. Dan Whitmore bought the building and the business in January 1994 and renamed it **Dan's Plumbing and Heating**.

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Dewey Hayes was once an Ashton plumber along with Hugh Hammond and Louis Smith, which meant that, at one time, our local plumbers were Hughie, Dewey, and Louie. Remember the Walt Disney ducks?

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Once when plumbers Hammond and Smith were trying to locate a water line east of the Opera House, they laughed and laughed when Glade Lyon asked them to use their witching wands. They had no idea what those funny-looking things hanging on their wall were. But they quit laughing when they located the water line by using them (See sidebar to Lyon's Store).

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H. L. Woodburn bought the rear lot in September 1938 but sold it in March 1945 to Robert J. Timmons for his farm equipment store, **Timmons Implement. Fremont Co-op Supply** with Ron Richards as manager purchased it in November 1975. The business was later sold to Theone Maupin, who operated **Maupin Auto Parts** there until his death, when it was taken over by his son, Dan.

Martin Elward bought the two lots just west of the Neifert Hotel in 1906. The **Ott's Place** building was constructed in 1906 on the north side of the 400 block by Snake River Lumber Co. for Morris Fried's store. In the spring of 1926, William Frederick Harris and his son William Otis Harris purchased it as the **H. and H. Billiard Parlor**. When William Frederick Harris died in 1935, Otis bought Harris's share of the business and named it **Ott's Place**. There were several pool tables, a couple of pinochle tables, and even slot machines when they were legal. Ott ran the business until 1942,

when he sold it to Elmer “Humpy” Duke, who sold to Vic Phillips. In 1986 it was purchased by Dan Kent, who sold to Boyd Mauer, who later let it revert to Vic Phillips.

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A story is told that once Sally Neifert opened the door of Ott’s Place and hollered, “Harry, if you don’t come home right now, I’m renting out your side of the bed.”

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A building next to Ott’s Place was a cafe, **Elward’s Buffet Resort**, operated and heavily advertised by Martin Elward. It was sold to Kraft, Sweeney, and Lamm in 1907, then to Carolina Kraft. Mary Ellen Sweeney and Celia Lamm purchased it on September 18, 1909; then William Sweeney on June 1, 1910; J. W. Johnson on June 3, 1911; William Sweeney again on July 12, 1911; and B. S. Christoffersen on May 17, 1913. B. M. Wood & Overton Bray bought it in 1919, but there is no indication whether or not any of the owners continued with a cafe there. It was later taken over by Laurel and Jackie Huntsman before they moved to the lot west of the Odd Fellows Building.

A tonsorial parlor (barber shop) was erected adjoining Martin Elward’s Buffet on April 12, 1906. This building was at one time used by Glen Huntsman as a cafe, by Jess Clark as his barber shop, and later by Sam Moon for an office, where he tried to gather financial support for his aluminum mine.

There is some confusion about the lots west of Ott’s Place that are now occupied by a Cardrol gasoline sales facility. It is believed that the two vacant lots are where Sally Neifert built her “Annex,” with ceilings so low that nearly everyone had to duck.

The buildings on the next three lots west had a long list of owners, including W. D. Porch, Peter Wilson, Victoria Peterson, Victoria Whitaker, P. H. Whitaker, P. H. and Mrs. E. A. Whitaker, Victoria Whitaker Burnett, and First National Bank of St. Anthony. H. G. Fuller purchased it in December 1930 and sold it to the Burley Implement Co. the same month. Charles F. McDonald purchased it in September 1938. These buildings were known as **Fremont Coop Supply** until 1944, when they were sold to Lloyd Compton for his garage. They were sold to Jack Swager in 1949; Frances Swager acquired title to them in 1956. He sold them to Robert Timmons in 1974, who then sold to Marvin Thomas in 1987 for **Buck’s Auto Repair**. He later sold to Todd Howell and Bill Turner.

The town continued to grow west of the railroad tracks. Block 33, just west of the tracks, was owned alternatively by Moore and Fuller, Fremont County, Murray Baum, and Elma M. Davis, until lots 15 and 16 were purchased by Glynn Richard “Dick” Davis in 1946. He built **Dick’s Drive Inn**, which was the place to go back then. Don Ghormley worked with him after Don got home from the service. In 1949 Dick sold to Elma M.

## *Businesses*

Davis, who sold to Lorenzo Davis in 1961, so he owned the whole block. Lorenzo Davis first built a home on the west lots of block 33 and had cabins to rent. Omaha National Bank took over from Lorenzo Davis and sold to Ernest Harrigfeld in 1964 for a cafe and gift shop, which he named **Trails Inn**. He sold to Lowell Bishop in 1968, and his wife, Ruth, ran an "old Folk's Home." In 1977 they sold the south half of the block to John Cooper, who sold to Larry Daniel in 1979. Chris and Gail Womack bought it from Mr. and Mrs. Larry Daniel in 1980, opening the snack bar and game room again and using the front part of the building for a child-care center. They sold to Kenneth Allen and Richard Beesley in 1983. Don and Mary Chriswell bought lots 7 through 10 of Block 33 in 1984 and immediately began an extensive remodeling program, adding to Daniels' hamburger stand to make **Trails Inn Cafe**, to which they added a dining room on the north in 2001. Their southern dining room has been continually used and has helped them meet community needs for 21 years.

Tammy Kent and then Wade Lehmann bought lots 4, 5, and 6 in 1996 behind the Trails Inn Cafe and built the **Ashton Laundromat** and a beauty shop.

Continuing west, C. C. Moore and H. G. Fuller bought Blocks 31, 32, and 33 in 1920 from the Ashton Townsite Co. In 1933 Blocks 31 and 32 were deeded to the **Ashton Golf Club**, which had a golf course there until 1939. H. G. Fuller, and then the City of Ashton, held

ownership in those blocks until 1951, when the city donated the land to Fremont School District 215 to build **North Fremont High School** there.

In 1955, the State of Idaho purchased lots 6 and 7 of Block 32 for their **National Guard** facility. This building currently houses the **Fremont School District 215 Bus Garage**.

### *East from Fifth Street, North side of Main Street*

From the corner east of Fifth Street and Main, the **Ashton Hotel** (whose official name was Hotel Ashton) was started by the Ashton Townsite Committee. The committee planned Main Street and donated for schools, churches, and the **I.O.O.F. Hall**. In March 1906 the members voted to build a hotel to cost not less than \$10,000. The **Oregon Short Line Railroad** crews hauled thirty-eight wagon loads of rock from a quarry north of Rankin's in May 1906 for the foundation, and the remainder of the building was red brick from **Johnson's Brickyard** just north of Ashton or from **Bonner's Brickyard** near Black Springs one mile south of Ashton. Hugh Rankin was the builder.

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The bar in the hotel basement was the place to go for "dime a dance" and "wide open gambling," especially during the Dog Derby.

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It is believed that the Ashton Townsite Committee planned to sell raffle tickets for the hotel at \$150 each, and the lucky winner would get the hotel on its completion. But the Idaho Legislature passed a law making lotteries illegal, so the committee had to return the money and look for other methods of financing the hotel. An entry in the Ashton Townsite Committee's books in May 1907 shows that the hotel cost \$14,499.44. The building was set back from the street, with several steps leading into the lobby. There was a veranda on the ground floor and a mezzanine on the second floor where dinners were served. There were also rooms that could be rented by the day as well as two- and three-room apartments with a shared bath.

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The writer, Glade Lyon, and his wife, Katie, rented one of the two-room apartments on the third floor of the Ashton Hotel in the 1940s, sharing a bathroom with Ivan and Mary Crouch.

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The hotel has had many managers, including Mort Anderson, W. J. Haack, Felix Burgeson, Kirkbride, Earl Barker, Charles Garside, and J. R. Atchley until it was closed in 1980. Included in the many businesses housed in the hotel were **Ashton Barber Shop, Ball Barber Shop, LaJetta Glover Beauty Parlor, Melba Schaats Beauty Parlor, Security State Bank, Yellowstone Banking Co., Idaho Bank of Commerce, Valley**

**Bank, Yellowstone Cafe, Lyd's Cafe, Laurel's Cafe, Lane Marotz's Karate Studio, the Derby Club** (owned by Royce V. Hilmer and William E. Hiatt Jr.), and, of course, the card-playing group on the mezzanine.

The Ashton Hotel was purchased by Hugh Rankin in 1918. He later sold to Utah Home Mortgage Co. Ellis Pearce purchased it in 1933. **Idaho Bank of Commerce** was a tenant from 1939. Mrs. Charles Garside purchased the building from Utah Mortgage in 1937, the same year that Mrs. C. T. Williams moved her dress shop **Williams' Smart Shop** into the hotel lobby.

The hotel was leased to Harry Gigley and the Continental Hotel Association from 1942 to 1952 and then was leased only to the Continental Hotel Association from 1952 to 1959. In 1972, Mrs. Garside sold the entire building, including the 75-room hotel, Derby Club bar, and the buildings housing the Bank of Commerce and the Ashton Cafe to Earl Barker.

Next page. *The original Ashton Hotel, built about 1906 and destroyed by fire about 1920. According to Chan Atchley, in his book Soul of the Land: (left to right) standing in street, two unidentified women and Mrs. Jim Davis; standing on porch, "Dad" Clay, John Christofferson, Mrs. Felix Burgess, unknown man, Bruce Catlett, Mrs. Alvin Seeley, Harvy Zhepp, Frank Carpenter, Dr. E. L. Hargis, and Ole Brothen; standing on stairs, F. X. Dohlentz and H. G. "Fess" Fuller, who was Ashton's first mayor.*



The **Ashton Cafe** Building, just east of the hotel, also changed management many times. Pete Riley ran it in about 1920 as **Yellowstone Cafe** but changed the name to **Lyd's Cafe** when he married the world-famous dog sled racer "Whistlin" Lyd Hutchison. Even after her death he continued to run it with his second wife, "Chic." Later owners were Willard and Irv Elliott, Glen Huntsman, Laurel Huntsman, Butch Huntsman, and J. R. Atchley. The building burned down, possibly in the 1960s.

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There was a "pass through" opening between the cafe and the City Drug so the cafe could order a milkshake or the drug store could order a hamburger.

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About 1940 the **Yellowstone Banking Co.**, a subsidiary of the Bank of Teton Valley located in Driggs, Idaho, with S. M. Meikle as president, was started in Ashton. It became **Idaho Bank of Commerce**, located in the southwest corner of the Ashton Hotel with J. H. VanDeusen as manager, with Dean Hossner becoming assistant manager about 1950. Royce Hilmer was assistant manager for several years until he was convicted of embezzlement and served time in the state penitentiary. Gerald Rich was assistant manager from about 1956 to 1958. Dean Hossner advanced to manager in 1958 with Jim Holcomb as assistant manager

about 1960 until 1977. Arlen Mortensen was manager for about two years in the early seventies.

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It was said that as a teller at Idaho Bank of Commerce, Roy Baker, gave out what the customer said was the wrong change. Roy answered, "We don't make mistakes." The customer then gave him a dime for coffee and said, "Have a good day," and Roy was \$100 short that night.

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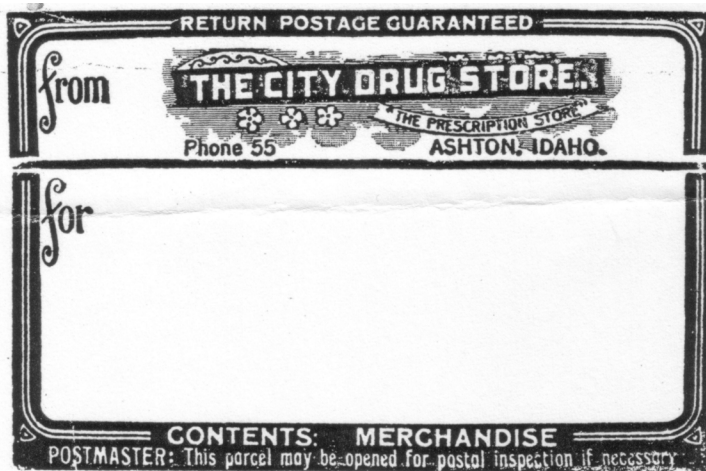
Paul Rushton, wearing a white Stetson and new bib overalls, walked into the First Security Bank with his partner, Gilbert Loveland, just before noon on April 17, 1930. He pointed a pistol at the teller and left with \$375. The robbers ordered the two employees, Lloyd Hodge, assistant cashier, and Mickey Christofferson, clerk, into the vault. Even though the thieves neglected to lock them in, the bank employees were still unable to locate Rushton and Loveland.

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The building east of the Ashton Cafe, most commonly known as the **City Drug Building**, was actually Ashton's first bank. **Security State Bank** opened early in 1906 with F. X. Dolenty as manager and cashier, and was first housed in the Moore and Fuller office building. Then Security State Bank rented a 10-by-30-foot space in the Enterprise Building while the City Drug Building was being built. The original vault is still visible and in use in the City Drug today. E. E. Petersen was president

## *Businesses*

and William Robinson cashier. Fred Swanstrum, a well-known Ashton resident, came to Ashton in 1910 and worked at Security State Bank as cashier until 1915 under president R. I. Rankin.



*Old shipping label from the City Drug.*

H. J. Hollingsworth owned the City Drug in the 1940s. The soda counter of that era is still in use. The business was a hub of many activities. Besides serving milkshakes through an opening in the wall to the Ashton Cafe to the west, it served as the concession stand for the Star Theater next door to the east. There were big double doors into the theater from the City Drug. Katie

Lyon, who worked at City Drug as a teenager, remembers that the store was also where people came to pay their water bills. The soda jerks took the money for the bills in exchange for a free movie ticket. Steve Durst ran, owned, and operated City Drug for many years. Bob Comstock purchased the business in the 1990s and has operated it with his wife Suzann ever since.

The Star Theater was built by William Swanstrum and George Swartz. It was operated for 42 years, beginning in 1915, by Fred Swanstrum. Mrs. Enoch Hunt, whose husband owned Hunt's Department Store across the street, played the piano for the vaudeville shows that performed there. Once a week, the theater would have a big give-away night where patrons packed the theater in hopes of winning dishes, money, or other prizes.

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Fred Swanstrum was a rather eccentric fellow. He once dressed up in a fur coat and sat near a fire in the middle of Ashton's Main Street in mid-July to give the tourists something to talk about.

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Dennis Gifford purchased the Star Theater from Willard Bonneru in 1959 with plans to make two apartments on the second floor and make a beauty shop out of the present ticket office. The building was sold to Jess Clark and his son Dick for **Clark's Barbershop** in



the 1960s. Jess and his wife Ortella lived in an apartment above the shop. The business was sold in 2005 to Billy Stronks. Ashton Beauty Shop also occupied the east corner of the building, currently under the proprietorship of Connie Burrell.

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Ortella Clark, at 100 years old, is one of Ashton's oldest citizens. She resides at the Ashton Nursing Home.

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The **Knudsen Building** east of the old Star Theater, more commonly known as **Lyon's Store**, was originally built by L. M. "Pat" Hartvigsen and later became Knudsen's grocery and general merchandise store, owned and operated by Niels Knudsen. After farming for three years, Hartvigsen formed a partnership with Neils Knudsen in the Ashton Cash Grocery. Knudsen joined the army in 1917, and the store was continued with L. M. "Pat" Hartvigsen and James A. Fryer. In 1927, just ten years after selling his interest in the store, Knudsen bought the business back again.

In 1942, Otis Harris bought Knudsen's, discontinued the line of groceries, and changed the name to Ashton Mercantile, and then sold it in June 1945 to John "Jack" T. Lyon, Ashton's depot agent for several years. He died in 1947, but his wife, Gloy, and his son, Glade, continued to operate it as Ashton Mercantile for a few years until the name was changed to "Lyon's." Lois Whitte-

more and Sarah Allison were long-time clerks in the store. After Lyon's Store closed in 1988, the building was rented for a while as a dance studio and then leased for a short time to Lyle and Ann Oldham, who hoped to turn it into a bakery. The building was sold to Bill Bates in 1998, and he rented it to Chuck Stanley. It was eventually leased to Margie Carlson in 1998, and she rented the back portion to Sheryl Umbach for her Flower Barn until 1999, when Margie bought the building and the flower business and continued operation as **Mountain Mercantile**.

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One day a little girl about six years old came into Ashton Mercantile in tears and cried that her mother had told her to go to Lyon's store and get a spool of thread, but she couldn't find Lyon's. The name of the store was immediately changed to "Lyon's."

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The traditional basement "TOYLAND" at Christmas in Lyon's was always highly anticipated and enjoyed by the children of Ashton.

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Dottie Wurtz, a colorful Ashton resident who could often be seen riding her bicycle around town, once got mad at Glade Lyon and threatened never to come into Lyon's Store again. And she didn't. She would stand at the door and holler for the clerks to bring merchandise to her.

At one time, Glade Lyon attempted to locate the sewer line behind Lyon's store by blindly digging, and hiring "Banjo" Andy to help dig, but to no avail. Keith deStwolinski, the local plumber, happened by, and when Glade appealed to him for help, he got his witching wands. Glade laughed and laughed, but by using them, Keith located the line (see sidebar to Hammond Plumbing).

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The **Enterprise Newspaper** Building sat to the east of Lyon's store in the middle of the north side of the 500 block of Main Street in Ashton's early days. In 1927 that building was sold to William Card, who moved it to his property north of the tracks and used it for his blacksmith shop. A new 30-by-80-foot brick building, for years known as the **Kiser Mortuary**, was built that same year next to Knudsen's to replace the Enterprise Newspaper building that had been moved from that site. The new building housed the post office for 12 years in its west half, while the front of the east half was used by Mrs. Katherine Kiser as a dress and specialty shop, and the rear half by her husband Lewis Kiser as **Kiser Mortuary**. The building was bought in 1944 by A. C. Snyder for a **Coast-to-Coast Store** and later sold to Neil Barkus, and later to Homer E. "Bud" Trussell in 1954. He sold to Bill Dick, who acquired a **Radio Shack** franchise and also sold floor coverings. Bill purchased the Lyon's store building to the west in 1989,

cutting a large doorway between the two buildings, but he returned ownership of the building to Glade Lyon in 1998. The east building was sold by Bill Dick to Dave LaLonde, who then sold to his son-in-law Kent Dummer, who later sold to Harold "Hersh" Lenz as the current **Lenz Electronics**.

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Bud Trussell, who purchased the store in 1954, said, "we moved here in 1954, and soon after we arrived, we ordered more stock, and here came Peter Kiewit with dozers, and they tore up the street. There was a three-foot drop from the sidewalk to the dirt exposed by the dozers."

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A large building on the northwest corner of Sixth and Main, commonly known as the **Ashton Theater**, was built by George Harrigfeld, probably in the late 1940s. It was a high-class theater, and George hired high school girls dressed in usher uniforms to help people find their seats. Apartments were located above it. In the late 1960s, the business, after being closed for a time, was purchased by a coalition of Ashton men, and the building reopened under the management of Clair Allison. It closed again in the 1970s. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the building also housed a number of other Ashton businesses, including **Jardine Jewelry Store** on its west side and the popular teen hangout **The Husky In 'n' Out** on its east side. It featured pinball machines

and had a drive-up window where customers could get hamburgers and soft ice cream. The building was purchased several times, not only for a theater but also for other enterprises.

The cornerstone of the **Odd Fellows Building** on the northeast corner of Sixth and Main was laid June 20, 1907, on lots that had been donated to the fraternity by the Ashton Townsite Co. with the proviso that it house the Ashton State Bank. The building was constructed in 1906 by Smoky Johnson, with William Baker doing the brickwork. There was a lumber and hardware store on the east side of the ground floor. The meeting room on the top floor, known as the Social Hall, was the scene of regular Friday night dances and other events during the 1930s. They had their own band that played up and down the valley. The building was cut in half and dragged away by teams of Josh Brower to become a store and printing office, with the latter half becoming Bill Card's blacksmith shop.

Around 1913, a building was added to the east side of the lodge hall and over the years had many occupants, including Tony's Tire Shop, the Utah Power and Light Co. offices, and the office of Dr. Ed Hargis. This building deteriorated and was destroyed about 1960.

Over the years, the first floor of the main building has housed many businesses, including a hardware store, the **Ashton Herald** newspaper, the **U.S. Post Office**, a harness and shoe repair shop, **Fitch Photo Shop**,

Dr. Stronks's dentist office, **Keith's Plumbing**, followed by **H. & S. (Hammond and Smith) Plumbing**, **Utah Power and Light Co.**, **Anna Moore's beauty shop**, **Hair Fair** owned by Linda Janssen, the **Flea Market** operated by the Odd Fellows and Rebekahs, **Stanley's Furniture Mfg.**, and most recently, **Arrowhead Realty**, owned by Todd and Laurie Hossner.

In the early 1950s, Ross Wynn bought a lot on the south side of the 700 block and then in 1954 traded it to Fall River R.E.C. for two lots on the north side of the 600 block, where they built **Wynn's Furniture**, a furniture and floor-covering store. It is in operation today, run by Ross's son Sam.

**Jackson's** sits at the northeast corner of Seventh Street and Main Street. The business was originally known as Circle K and was built in the early 1970s.

Early development on the east end of Main street included the **Log Cabin Court Motel** built at the north corner of 10th and Main Streets in about 1920. It was built by Hugh Rankin and David Kenderson Rankin.

*Next page. This photo of the Odd Fellows Building was probably taken in 1908 or before since it is a Teton Pharmacy postcard and is similar to others that are dated 1908. This building has housed several businesses, including a bank and a newspaper (the Ashton Herald) and appears in many photos of Ashton. The building is still owned by the Odd Fellows and is still standing as of 2006.*



### **Side Streets**

One-half block south on Fifth Street, just south of what is now Key Bank, on the north side of the alley, was a drayage business started in 1906 by Harry Woodburn, who was later a major bulk gas and oil distributor. It was purchased by Norman Kent in 1940, and he and his wife, Leona, lived there with their children. Norm delivered coal and hauled whatever else the community needed moved.

In April 1906, Joseph Baker and Parley Whittaker built a mammoth 60-by-100-foot livery stable with a shed roof addition for carriages at the southeast corner of Fifth and Fremont. It was one of the largest buildings in Ashton at the time. Joe's son Horace bought out Whittaker a year later.

In 1906, **Baker's Livery** started a stage line from Ashton to Marysville. C. Nordvall and H. F. Hulse purchased that livery stable in 1910.

On the southwest corner of Fifth and Fremont was a small building that housed a shoe and harness repair shop. That building and the livery stable were replaced, probably in the 1950s, by Leo A. "Sam" Earle and his brother Dave, who had an Allis Chalmers farm machinery dealership and a Case dealership called **Earle Equipment**. They later acquired a Ford dealership. After they closed, the building sat empty for some years until it was purchased by Robert Gaston for his **Yamaha Snow Mobile** business. After he retired, he sold the

building to Robert Comstock Jr., who used it for storage and later for the home of **Fall River Design**, an embroidery business operated by Steve Anderson. The embroidery business was later moved to the City Drug Store, and the building is now used for storage.

At one time there was a blacksmith shop where the current U.S. Post Office is on Fifth Street, one and a half blocks south of Main Street. It was owned by a man named Wessel. A livery stable was south of what is now Key Bank, across the alley north from the current Methodist church.

**Ghormley Mechanical Industries**, one block north of Main street on Seventh Street, has been owned and operated continuously by the same family since 1912. That was when Edward Stewart Waugh moved here with his family and lived in a tent while they got the shop running. They did metal repairs, welding, plow sharpening, horseshoeing, and anything else to keep the business going. Son Claude took over the business and eventually sold out to his nephew Donald Ghormley in 1962. Don had been working in the business since he was 12 years old. Mitchell and Maurice, Don's son, now operate the shop. The shop sits on the same corner as the site of Ashton's early water tank.

The **Ashton Cheese Factory** was located half a block east of the Opera House, on the southwest corner of Sixth and Fremont. The first owner of the lot was J. A. Fulleton in 1907, and then it transferred to G. G. Wright

## *Businesses*

in 1909. The lot was next sold to Conrad Peterson in 1944, and in 1945 to Nelson Ricks Creamery, which probably built the factory. Ownership was vested for some time in Elizabeth M. Peterson and Jean Alice Peterson, who returned it to Nelson Ricks Creamery in 1963. It was managed by Bill Ware, and later by Basil Manwaring in May 1955. They bought milk from all the local dairies. It was a favorite place for kids, because they could buy a bag of cheese curds for a dime. It had a distinctive, warm smell that hovered all along that block of Sixth Street. The building was later demolished by Glade Richards, who built a garage and shop for the E.A.A.

What are now vacant lots on Fremont Street between the Ashton Cheese Factory and the Opera House at one time had a tennis court. When the American Legion owned the Opera House in the 1950s, they installed swings, teeter-totters, and a sand pile for a children's playground on the vacant lots.

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When it was decided to install a drinking fountain on the playground, the plumber's witching wands were used to locate the buried water line. They worked for Hugh Hammond and Glade Lyon, and the line was located, but plumber Louis Smith couldn't make them work.

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## **Other Businesses**

The history of Ghormley's **Burnt Bun** is uncertain. It had several locations. The original hamburger stand, owned by Bill and Edna Ghormley, was near the Rankin Motel on Highway 20 before it was moved to the corner of Sixth and Main Streets, where late-night moviegoers could get a hamburger. This location also had two gas pumps and was later owned and operated by Laurel and Jackie Huntsman. The most memorable Burnt Bun was a kids' hangout in the early 1960s on school property just west of **Hummell Motel**. It bordered Main Street, just across the street from North Fremont High School, and students had easy access to it for lunch.

In 1977, David Krueger moved his manufacturing and sales business named **Pioneer Gifts** from Salt Lake City to a location south of the east side of Marysville, where he built a home and two warehouses. He later moved the operation to northern Idaho and finally back to Salt Lake City.

An old photo shows that the **Cottage Hotel** was located, facing south, on Fremont Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets with the Hulse Livery Stable to the east.



## *Businesses*

In the novel *Desperate Scenery*, Elliott Paul tells of **Madame Lake's Emporium** or hotel, which was a house of ill repute located just north of the baseball diamond. It was fenced, but the girls were still able to watch the ball games from the area of deep center field. He tells the story of the night it burned down and of the hapless gentleman whose pants were destroyed in the fire. He was afraid to go home to his wife without them so had to find a tailor in the middle of the night to make him a new pair as near to the old ones as possible so she would not know. True story?

### **Service Stations**

The automobile brought many changes in the business community. One of the first automobile service stations was on the west corner of the south side of the 400 block owned by Neal Christiansen, and then by Ted Heller, who ran it for 19 years and sold to R. J. Davis. It was then bought by Theone "Tony" Maupin, who used it as a tire shop.

Theone "Tony" Maupin was one of the main gas-station operators in Ashton. He started his first service station August 1, 1951. He bought the property from Cliff Long with proceeds from the sale of his wife Madeline's Jersey cow and a \$3,000 bank loan. He leased from Vica Pep 86. He worked alone the first two years from 8:00 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. seven days a week. In 1953,

Standard Oil Company changed their name to Amoco Oil Company, and the company added a truck bay.

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Darrell Murdoch tells of working at Tony's Amoco when an overbearing California tourist towing a big boat came in demanding more service than Darrell thought he deserved, and, as he was leaving, demanded to know where he could put in his boat. Darrell suggested Fullmer's Beach, which was a swimming pool in the sand dunes northwest of St. Anthony. According to residents of St. Anthony, the tourist actually went to Fullmer's Beach and demanded to know where he could launch his boat.

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In about 1968, Tony built a new station at 300 North Highway 20 but soon sold it to Jack Rice, who operated it for a short time and then removed the gas pumps and put in a full-service grocery store called **Jack's**. They sold fishing licenses and equipment, and it was a popular stop for tourists and locals alike. He and his son, Mike, operated it successfully for several years until Mike's wife Teresa was tragically killed in a hold-up, and they then sold the business in 1993 to Larry Huhn, who closed it in 1998.

In 1960, "Tony" was able to acquire a bulk oil distributorship, and in 1984 he purchased the Fremont Co-op building as a self-service station. The Cardtrol self-service business was started there in 1978.





*Russel Scow, about 1940.*

## *Businesses*

In 1992, Tony's son Dan Maupin took over, becoming a Carquest dealer and adding new products and automotive parts. In 1997, Dan opened the Teton Travel Plaza service station north of Ashton on Highway 20. In 1998, they took out the pumps from the original Tony's Amoco on the corner of Fourth and Main and put in a tire and lube shop, which was later sold to Rod Moulton, who now operates Rod's Tire Shop there.

Adjacent to the north of Jack's Grocery Store was a service station owned and operated by Jay Lords. The family lived behind the station and, when they sold the business, moved the house with them southwest of town. The newly remodeled station was leased by Bill Kerssen, but it was soon closed by the EPA for a petroleum leak. It is now a convenience store.

Another service station on Highway 20 was originally The Red Lunch, run by Jim and Ada Whittemore about 1920 across the street east of Rankin Court. It was so called because the stools had red seats. Bill Bessey turned the "Red Lunch" into a Texaco Service Station about that same time. Recently, this building has housed a fly-fishing store.

At one time there may have been ten service stations in town. The most westward one was owned and operated by Keith Nave along with a hamburger joint. When Keith got home from the service in 1946, he came to Ashton to see the dog races and went to work cooking. He noticed the Laureleaf Service Station just west of

the railroad tracks on the south side of Main Street and rented it. He says he had \$56. He bought a gas camp stove and had Claud Waugh make him a griddle from the lid of a washing machine. There was a plank on two stumps to work on. There were two gas pumps, but he didn't have enough money to have the tanks filled. He named it Keith's Lunch and operated it for about two years before he sold it to Don Caverhill. The LDS church eventually acquired this property and built the Ashton LDS Seminary building on it. The building is currently a dentist office for Drs. Kunz, Brizee, and Toenjes.

On the west corner of the 600 block was Hemming's Chevrolet garage, which had two pumps. Across Main Street to the north and a block east was Tom's Chevron Service Station owned by Tom Chamberlain. He also had a repair shop for lawn mowers and sold chainsaws from 1955 to 1965. This business was later owned by Bob Bean, Circle K, and is now Jackson's Convenience Store.

Ernie B. "E. B." Hart had a Conoco station on corner of Sixth and Main where the old Ashton Theater is.

Jon and Lorene Hoch came to town in 1940. He worked for Howe Lumber before he bought the Texaco Court, a gas station at the corner of seventh and Main, with cabins for rent, in 1942 until 1965. It was closed and vacant for some time and then was purchased by the Ashton Memorial Nursing Home. They

sold the cabins to Jessen's Bed and Breakfast on South Highway 20. The site is now the home of Baxter Funeral Home.

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Bud Trussell reported that Jon Hoch ran the gas station and was cranky all the time. A tourist came into his station, and Jon asked him, "Do you want some gas?" The tourist said, "No, I just want to use your restroom. I don't need anything else." When he came out, Jon threw a bucket of water on him.

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A station owned by Cliff Boger stood in the middle of the 600 block on the north side of Main Street. It also had the American Oil Distributorship, and he later turned the station into a bar and lounge. It is now the location of the Baptist Church.

Bill and Edna Ghormley had a service station with two gas pumps on the corner of Sixth and Main, and a hamburger stand called the Burnt Bun.

On the east corner of Fifth and Main Street was Harry Owens' Wescott station, and in its life was owned by Jim Whittemore, George Amen and Dick Miller, and J. R. (Junior) Atchley. This site is now the home of Key Bank.

The Ford Garage owned by Sam Earle a half block off Main Street on South Fifth Street also sold gas at one time.

The lot at the corner of Park Avenue and Main was

first purchased by E. M. Varin on January 10, 1910, and then by Benjamin A. Wood ten days later, then by H. G. Fuller in 1919. H. Thomas bought it in 1936, and H. G. Fuller two months later. Then Gem State Oil, Dewey Davis, and in December 1936, Utah Oil Refining, which probably built the station there that was managed first by Chet Moyer, then by Jack Harker until he sold in 1947 to Cliff Long, who sold to Tony Maupin in 1951.

Ernie Hart's Conoco was on the corner of Sixth and Main.

Log Cabin service station was on west Main Street but became Ashton OK Rubber Welders in 1951.

## **Newspapers**

**The Enterprise** was started in a tent first used as a home by Roy Driscoll in Ashton, in 1906, on the lot at the northeast corner of Sixth Street and Main Street before the Odd Fellows Hall was built there. Heber H. Hartvigsen who, at age 19, was Ashton's first newspaper publisher, ran the first printing shop and later used that tent. The newspaper was called *The Enterprise*. Its first issue was printed on August 10, 1906, with F. X. Dolenty as editor. After a few months, the business moved to the upper story of Dick Humphries' saloon until summer came.

Boylen's of St. Anthony had built a small building in 1906 on the north side of the 500 block of Main Street for a man's clothing store operated by Charlie

## *Businesses*

Anderson. When they closed, Hartvigsen bought the building for his newspaper. In 1908, the Ashton Hotel and the Ashton Enterprise were the only businesses on the north side of the 500 block. The Enterprise was sold to C. M. Mercer in 1910, and then in 1917 to Fred Martin, Glen Kost, and others who continued to operate the newspaper as the Non-Partisan League, a socialistic cooperative of farmers. Their self-proclaimed aim was to “enlist the aid of farmers who could contribute funds to operate a large cooperative general store.” There was much dissension, mostly political, between the various factions, and in about 1920 three fires destroyed the printing equipment that was stored in a building near the Ashton Opera House.

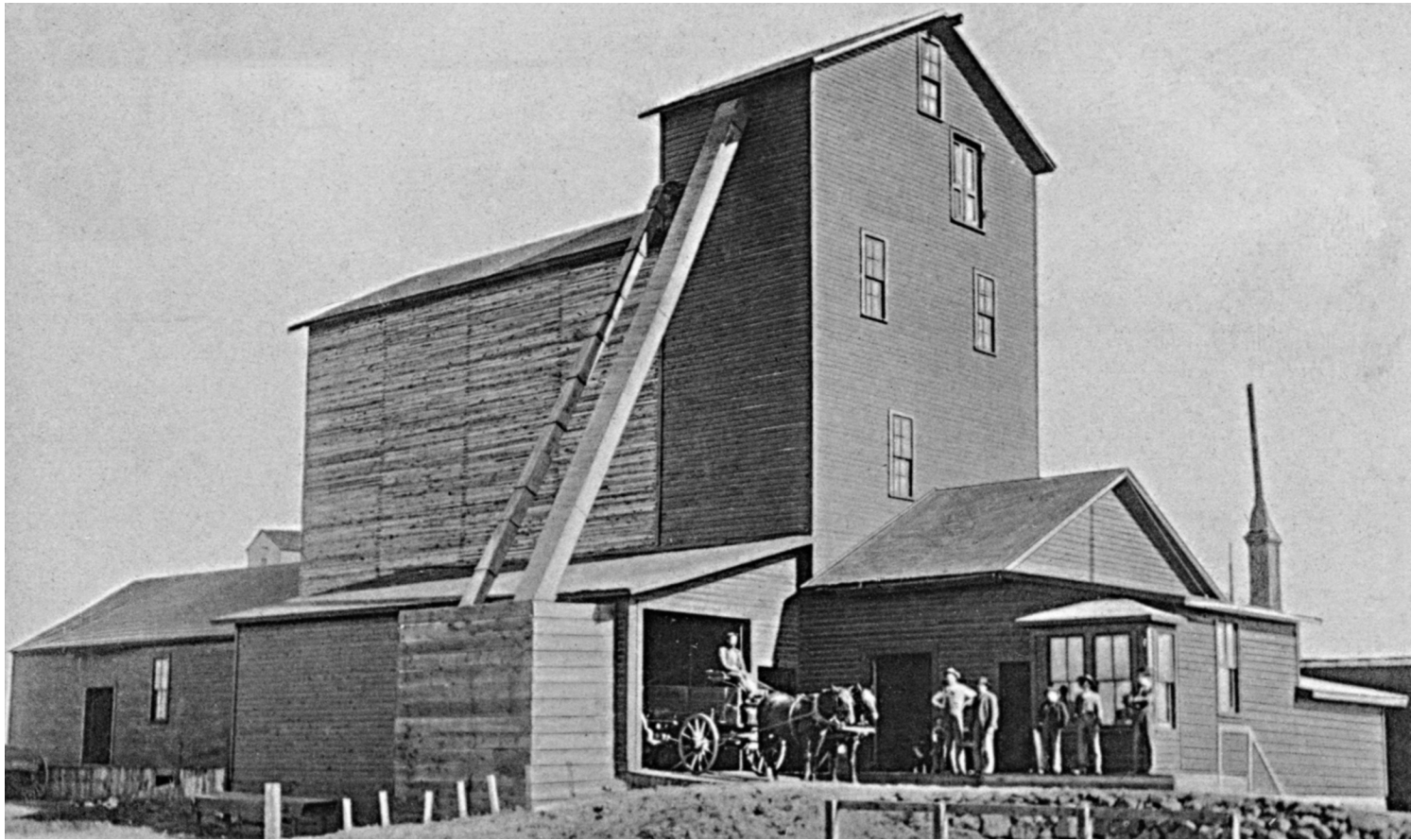
The **Ashton Herald**, owned by W. A. “Bill” Lansberry, and then later by his son Milford Lansberry, had already started publication by then near the corner of Fourth and Main, partly to oppose the Non-Partisan League’s political views. Their first edition was dated April 24, 1919, but was not actually released until April 26. Ralph and Jean Hunter were listed as the publishers of the *Ashton Herald* in 1955, and they were named first-place winners among papers of that size by the Idaho Press Association. Harry Beall purchased the *Ashton Herald* in 1957 and appointed Gwen Albrethsen as editor-manager. Later the newspaper was purchased by St. Anthony’s newspaper, the *Chronicle News*. Carol Bessey was its longtime editor.

## **Elevators**

The first train to stop at the Ashton depot site was on February 14, 1906. There was a huge celebration that included the opening of the Millers Bros. Elevator located on the corner of Park Avenue and Main. Special trains brought in hundreds of people who helped celebrate with a non-stop dance and free refreshments furnished by the local bars. Thomas Bros later acquired Miller Bros. Elevator.

Other elevators listed in a 1910 business directory were Miller Bros. Elevator, Jonas Mosser, Mgr.; Ashton Milling and Grain Co., S. D. Farnsworth Mgr.; R. D. Merrill Grain Co.; J. Harshberger, Pres.; Ashton Elevator Co., S. D. Farnsworth, Mgr.; Hershberger and Co., J. Hershberger, Pres.; J. C. Robertson and Co., J. C. Robertson, Pres;

Grain elevators built along the railroad tracks on Park Avenue included **Reinke Grain and Pillsbury Grain**, which was the favorite place to play cards with Doyle Daniels. Richard Reinke bought his first elevator, located on Railroad Avenue and Main, C. M. & E. Colorado Milling and Elevator, which had been managed by Mott Fuller and later by Cliff Paskett, purchased in 1948 from Herb Stewart, who had bought from Jack Thomas.



*Elevator, looking to the southwest from Park Avenue near Pine Street, about 1908.*

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In 1937, R. O. Reinke announced the purchase of the Mark Means Building, which would give him storage for an additional 70,000 bushels of wheat. On March 16, 1955, one elevator burned to the ground, destroying 35,000 bushels of grain and causing an estimated \$100,000 damage, but Reinke rebuilt it.

Reinke Grain Co. built a geodesic dome office building at the same location just west of the railroad tracks. In 1980, the company bought the Pillsbury Co. Elevators in Ashton, and France Siding on Highway 32 south-east of Ashton. Reinke Grain leased the E 1/2 N 1/2 and E 1/2 S 1/2 of block 33 to Selco Service Corp. in 2000.

Thomas Bros. Elevator was sold to Hal Harrigfeld.

Years later, Lynn Loosli built several grain bins on Park Avenue just south of Main Street.

### **Businesses along Highway 20**

Highway 20 from Ashton to West Yellowstone was opened in 1957, and many businesses were then started along it or were moved to it from Highway 47, which was Ashton's Main Street. Some businesses were already established on it before the change was made.

Hugh Rankin and David Kenderson Rankin built the Rankin Court about 1920 on the west side of Highway 20, just south of Ashton. The Log Cabin Court was later sold to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hummell, who opened it in 1960, operated it for about 14 years, and then sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Eugene P. Morrison.

Hummell Motel was opened by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hummell in 1950 and was sold in 1957 by Mrs. Jack Swager to Mr. and Mrs. Steven Davis.

In 1958, the **Hamburger Haven** was built near the south end of town on the east side of Highway 20 by Claude Lee. It was later known as D & L Cafe; then Doyle Walker operated it as the Teton Cafe. He leased it to Linda and Dan Kent and Glenda Heskett. In more recent years, it was **Big Jud's**, home of the one-pound hamburger. The building is currently being remodeled as a real-estate office.

**Fall River Cafe**, about five miles south of Ashton on State Highway 20, was built in the 1960s by Harry Housely. Purchased and operated by Jill Lehmkuhl, it was known locally as Jill's Cafe. She sold it in 2004.

In the 1960s, Joe Rankin built **Rankin's Bowling Alley** on the west side of Highway 20 on the south side of Ashton's Main Street. He operated it for many years as a league bowling alley, part of the elementary school's physical-education program, and a small cafe. Dennis Nichols, with financial backing from Slusser Wholesale of Idaho Falls, bought the bowling alley in the early 1970s and turned it into an **IGA** grocery store. In 1983, he sold it to Dave Thatcher, who sold to his son-in-law Dave "Jake" Jacobsen in 1997. Now known as **Dave's Jubilee Market**, it is a popular stop for gas and groceries for those heading up to Island Park.



*The Rankin Motel, about 1930.*

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The **Frosttop Drive-In** opened in the 1960s on the farthest west corner of Ashton's Main Street; it was owned and operated by the Garner family. It is still in operation today after a succession of owners. Mike and Carol Rasmussen opened **Performance Sports** north of it, selling snowmobiles, jet boats, and four-wheelers, and servicing small engines. **Idaho Irresistibles** opened in a home on the west side of Highway 20 in the 1980s, selling a complete line of fishing equipment and supplies. **Swiss Precision** opened their greenhouse business on Highway 20 in the 1980s just north of the city limits, selling all sorts of nursery plants and contracting landscaping.

**Jack's Grocery Store** started life as a gas station owned by Tony Maupin. The business was run by Jack Rice and his son, Mike, for many years. In 2004, after being vacant for several years, the building was purchased by Rodolfo and Robin Rivas, Cody and Caureen Miller, and Steve and Kathy Anderson, dba Lyonhearted LLC, who remodeled it and leased the space. Robin Rivas leased part of it for a Mexican restaurant named **Mi Ranchito**, and by **Swiss Precision Enterprises**, who sublet part of it to **Outback Realty**.

Jay Sutton opened **Sutton's Saw Shop** in the late 1960s a half block east of Highway 20 repairing small motors, but sold to David Birch, who still operates it.

The **Ashton Visitor's Center** was built just north of town on Highway 20. It is owned by the city of Ashton

and manned by volunteers. It has a picnic area, restrooms, and a dumping station for RVs.

In the early 1990s, Corwin Coughlin purchased 45 acres just north of the Ashton Visitor's Center and built a **Super 8 Motel**, a convenience store, and a cafe that he named **Glade's Cafe** after Glade Lyon, who was the real-estate agent who helped him find property. It was later closed, reopened as a **Burger King** for a short time, and is currently occupied by **Big Jud's**. Later, Valley Wide acquired the convenience store and cafe. The motel was recently purchased by Dave Purcell and has been renamed **Ashton Inn**.

**Ashton Memorial Nursing Home** purchased six acres east of the motel, where they built their new facility after completely closing the old hospital.

The property immediately to the north was purchased in 2004 by the Klinglers, who built a store featuring fishing equipment and drift boats, and the property to the east of that was purchased by J&P LLC in 2005.

## **Seed Potato Industry**

The Ashton area is world-renowned for its seed potatoes. The peculiar characteristics of the silt loam soil, elevation, climate, and water of the area contribute to the industry. There is a lower incidence of disease organisms that affect potatoes than in other soils. A short summer season also benefits seed potatoes,



contributing to the vigor of the plants and shortening the time diseases have to gain a foothold in the crop.

The first potatoes were grown in family gardens and stored in root cellars. In 1920 Orvil Stansill was the first in the Ashton area to plant potatoes for seed. In 1921, Mr. Stansill and George Harrigfeld, E. Heseman, A. H. Strong, and Mark White, all farmers in Ashton and Marysville, built a potato cellar north of Ashton. Local growers adopted the idea of a seed-potato crop and won ribbons in 1924 at the Idaho State Seed Show for their potatoes, including Netted Gems (Russet Burbanks), Irish Cobblers, and Idaho Rurals.

Early growers used horse-drawn, single-row planters and diggers to harvest potatoes. In the fall, after frost killed the vines, the digger lifted potatoes out of the dirt and left them on the ground. Large crews gathered the spuds by hand into baskets, and those into sacks, which were loaded by hand onto wagons and hauled to small, dirt-topped cellars for storage until spring planting. The work was slow and backbreaking but put food on the table.

During the 1920s and '30s, the seed industry in Ashton helped meet the needs of potato growers in the rest of the state. J. R. Simplot, one of Idaho's most influential farmers, and other pioneers of the potato industry were building up their operations from small farms to large organizations. The Ashton seed potato farmers joined together as the Ashton Seed Growers, which

addressed issues of importance to the industry and promoted Ashton seed-potato industry.

Joseph Marshall, an Ashton seed grower instrumental in the formation of the Idaho Potato Commission, recognized that the common practice of planting the cull potatoes from each crop was damaging the yield and quality of the resulting crop. In 1940, the Idaho Crop Improvement Association was created to develop and enforce regulations regarding the quality and characteristics of seed potatoes to define certified seed. The regulations specified that certified seed potatoes would undergo inspections during the growing season, be tested for diseases, and be tagged as "Certified" before delivery to customers.

Even more interest in Idaho potatoes was created in 1940 when Union Pacific, the University of Idaho, Oregon State, and the Idaho and Federal Departments of Agriculture brought the "Spud Special," a train billed as an "eight-car exposition" about potatoes. It visited several states and numerous cities. More than 35,000 visitors viewed the traveling exposition.

During World War II, dehydrated potatoes were part of the rations for troops fighting in Europe and the Pacific. The Simplot Company was a major supplier of potato products to the military. After the war, Simplot perfected the process of freezing French-fried potatoes, ushering in an era of major growth in the industry. A huge demand for frozen French fries grew from the

## *Businesses*

development of fast-food chains. This led to a need for many more acres of potatoes to be planted, harvested, and stored, which required a greater number of seed potatoes, which affected Ashton. In 1954 the entire state of Idaho had 10,941 acres of seed potatoes, and seed was grown in at least 21 counties. In 1962 Fremont County alone had 6,180 acres of seed potatoes.

During the fifties and sixties, the major change in the potato industry was mechanization. Single-row planters requiring workers to hand-place a seed piece were replaced by two- and four-row planters that picked up and placed the seed potato in the ground and buried it all in one operation. Potato diggers, or “combines,” could dig the rows of spuds, separate the dirt and vines from the potatoes, and carry the crop over conveyors directly to a truck bed. They could then be unloaded in the cellars onto pilers, which moved the potatoes without handling them. In the fifties, “the hog,” a movable piler that operated at floor level, was developed, enabling the cellars to be emptied mechanically.

*Marilyn Monroe promoting Idaho potatoes.*



In 1965, Walter Sparks, a researcher at the Aberdeen Research and Experiment Station, convinced Preston Atchley of Ashton to install a forced-air ventilation system in his new cellar. That year an early frost hit the area, and many potatoes were frozen in the fields. After the spuds were stored in the cellars, those damaged by frost began to rot and spread disease into the rest. The only farmer able to save his potatoes was Atchley. That one demonstration convinced the local potato industry of the value of ventilation systems for potato storage, and most cellars in the Ashton area now have them.

Research in potato production, disease, and new varieties goes on constantly. The development of tissue culture, that is, growing a plant from a few cells of another plant, has made new varieties available and helped seed growers reduce disease by replacing seed stocks regularly. Greenhouses use tissue-cultured plants to produce disease-free tubers for seed-potato growers. Each year the seed-potato crop increases geometrically. By the third or fourth year of production, the seed grower sells to the producer who grows potatoes for consumers. The largest potato greenhouse in the Pacific Northwest, owned and operated by Glen and Emma Atchley, is just five miles east of Ashton.

The Ashton area is designated a Crop Management Area by the Idaho Department of Agriculture, and the only potatoes that may be grown in the area are certified seed potatoes. It has been the world's largest seed-

potato producing area for many years. Over the past few decades, the number of seed-potato farmers has dropped dramatically. In 1962, 160 were listed in Fremont County by Idaho Crop Improvement. Today there are only fifteen, including the Atchleys, Kurt Kandler, and Tom Howell. In the 1990s the Ashton area had over 13,000 acres of seed potatoes, but in 2004 the number dropped to around 10,000. Seed potatoes remain a basic source of income for area farmers, and agriculture remains the basis for the economy of Fremont County and Ashton.

### **Mexican Laborers**

The influx of Mexican laborers started around 1945. At first the numbers were small, but they continued to grow over time. By around 1975, there were a good number of laborers who worked in the potato-farming industry and labored in general for farmers or loggers in the summer months, returning to Mexico in the winter. However, over time many of these hard-working people brought their families to Ashton to stay. They became property owners, taxpayers, and an accepted and important part of the community. As their children grew up attending Ashton schools, many went on to continue their educations. Most recently, Ashton's youth of Mexican descent who have either graduated from college or are currently studying include a doctor,

## *Businesses*

a lawyer, an architect, a schoolteacher, and a serviceman in the U.S Navy, just to name a few.

### **Weather**

Ashton's first full-time weatherman was George Sadoris, who started keeping track of local temperature and precipitation about 1969, and supplying the information to the TV station so Lloyd Lindsey Young and other newscasters could tell us what had been happening and what might be "in the wind." When George

retired in 1982, John Blackburn took over, recording the maximum and minimum daily temperature, precipitation, and snow depth. This information was sent to the National Weather Service and the U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration for almost ten years until he and his wife went on a mission for the LDS church. Wendell Rich then began reporting the weather until he moved in August 2003 and the Targhee National Forest personnel took over.

## *Chapter 3*

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **Law Enforcement**

Through the years many individuals have served in the capacity of law enforcement. Ashton's first marshal, Joseph S. Johnson, was appointed August 8, 1906. His salary was \$60 per month, which was a high wage for those days. The village clerk received \$2 and the treasurer \$1 per month. James Kirkland soon replaced him at \$50 per month, with L. E. Judkins as night watchman at \$10 per month. A year or so later, the new marshal, George Carlow, was asked to resign, but a petition with 22 signatures saved his job.

Ashton's first police car was a pickup used by both the police and the maintenance crew. With no radios, communication was difficult, so yellow lights were installed on the City Building and the Ashton Hotel, and

the telephone operator would turn them on if the police were needed.

Other law enforcement officers include Frank Garman, Charles Heath, O. P. Sparkman, Ed Schofield, Scott Christiansen, Donald Simpkin, Warren Bratt, Bryan Awwin, Bob Worrell, Charles Heskett, Glen Munger, John Atchley, Earl Smith, George Ivie, George C. Amen, James Allison, Eldon Pence, Ray McBride, Earl Barker, Wayne Thompson, Tom Stegelmeier, Robert L. G. Gunter, Thomas Ray Murdoch, George Sadoris, Kerry Watts, Ted Heller, Dale Smithies, Bob McDonald, Ed Sebeck, Bob Perez, Stephen Brood, Dave Marine, Don Sibbit, Don Fox, Lynnnette Welker, Brett Goebel, Greg Griffel, Herbert Strong, E. J. McKinley, Tom Rush, Stephen Cramer, Birch, and Tom Mattingley. These are

## *Infrastructure*

not necessarily in order, and most of the information from the years 1917 through 1949 is lost.

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In 1917, the marshal was instructed to install 100 feet of hitching rack along Sixth Street.

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Oliver "Bronc" Sparkman was Fremont County sheriff from 1921 until 1926 and then was probably appointed Ashton's marshal.

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Ted Taylor was chief of the Ashton Volunteer Fire Department for thirty years. Henry Bolland was Ashton's justice of the peace from 1972 to 1975.

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### **City Water System**

Ashton's municipal water tank was erected in 1907, and the city water system was finished in 1908. The first well was drilled near the junction of Seventh and Pine Streets, and a water tower was erected there. In May 1910, the city paid McMullen Plumbing and Heating \$1,549.53 for the Water Works. A bond to finance a new tank and tower was rejected in 1920. Then, in January 1923, ice built up on the tank. When John Davis attempted to dislodge it, a large piece of ice fell and

hit one of the supports, which caused the tower to twist and fall, and Davis was injured. Several citizens responded to his calls for help, including Dr. Hargis, Dr. Doty, William Lansberry, F. A. Humes, Dan Thomas Jr., Laurence Manning, R. G. Baker, Paul Haack, and Mrs. Randall Howe, a trained nurse.

A new well was drilled about 1924, and a water tower was brought in from Jackson Hole, Wyoming. Two more wells were drilled near the intersection of Tenth and Main. A new ground-level water storage tank was built about 1985 and currently furnishes water for the city.

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A familiar wide-scape photograph was taken from atop the tower in 1917. It hung in Ashton Public Library for many years until it was damaged. Recently it was restored, and copies of it were sold to raise money for the Ashton Archives. (Part of this photo was used on the first page of this book.)

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As they neared Ashton after a car ride, kids would chant, "I can see the water tower, I can see the water tower."

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George Kent drove the sprinkler wagon for the village for many years.

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## **Streets**

The first city streets in Ashton were graded dirt. They were said to be so bad that even a team and wagon could sometimes not make it. It wasn't long before they were graveled, and then a layer of pumice was added to fill the bog holes. About 1956, Mayor Timmons added two to three inches of gravel and over-sprayed in the 1960s with asphalt. In about 1978, a Teton Dam Recovery grant of \$600,000 along with matching funds from a city bond allowed the streets to be built up and surveyed for proper drainage. Two more inches of gravel and a seal coat later made the streets very good.

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It was so exciting when the first automobile came to town. One night some friends were gathered near Farnum, southeast of Fall River. Suddenly they saw strange lights across the river coming down the dugway. Everyone got excited, especially Dooley Oberhansley. He was sure that the world was coming to an end. The rest of the group had a hard time convincing him that it was only an automobile with headlights, moving on toward the Fall River Bridge.

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Notice the signs on Ashton's Main Street. They actually say "Maine" Street. When the wrong street signs arrived, city employees just painted over the "e."

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*Deep snow sometimes made travel difficult.*

## *Infrastructure*

### **Sewer**

The original sewer system was put in Fremont and Idaho Streets in about 1917. It was connected to what was called a “cess pool” on the north end of Third Street. That was used until about 1960, when the city purchased ground west of Highway 20 from C. L. Ashley that had three ponds on it. Pumps and aerators were added in the 1970s with help from a federal grant.

### **Mail Service**

The first mail service in the Upper Snake River Valley began in 1866. It went by stagecoach to Eagle Rock (now known as Idaho Falls), then as far north as St. Anthony. In 1896, service was extended to Lodi on a Star Route by team and wagon three times a week, with Mrs. Mary Dorcheus as Postmistress. Morris Sprague used a dog sled to deliver the mail that first winter. Then George White Sr. carried the mail from Chester up the old Fall River road to Farnum, Lillian, and Squirrel before the Oregon Short Line reached Drummond. Other delivery points in 1906 were Vernon, Ora, Marysville, Drummond, Greentimber, and Warm River.

In February 1906, Harry Cannon was appointed postmaster for the Ashton Post Office, which was located in his general merchandise store building at the west corner of the 500 block of Main Street. Team and wagon delivered the mail until the “Railway Mail

Service” train arrived a few days before Christmas in 1906. Harry served until December 1909; Felix Burgess served until March 1915. At about this time, the Post Office was moved to the Moore and Fuller Building, and then moved again to the rear of the First National Bank Building, which later became the Neifert Hotel. Earl J. Kidd succeeded Felix Burgess in 1915, and Richard Baker followed him until November 1933.

In 1927, the location of the Post Office was changed again, to the west half of the Hartvigsen Building. Thomas Hargis followed Baker, serving until 1949, when he was succeeded by his wife, Jalma “Chic” Riley Hargis. In 1938, the location was changed to the Howe Lumber Co. building and then, in 1960, to a new building at 608 Main Street. In 1954, Richard P. “Bud” Swanstrum was appointed as postmaster. He was called to serve with the National Guard from October 1961 until August 1962, and while he was gone, Virginia W. Hargis served as officer in charge. Bud continued to serve until his retirement in May 1979, after the longest term of service of any postmaster in Ashton. Wendell L. Brinkerhoff, as officer in charge, succeeded him temporarily until August 1979, when Rex Wilson was appointed postmaster. During this time Val Arnold served for several months as officer in charge. Kerry Cottrell succeeded him in 1986 until his retirement in 1999.

In 1989, a new post-office building was constructed at 500 Fremont Street. Corey Knapp and Cindy Lee



Grover were, in turn, the officers in charge until February 2000, when Royce C. Jackson was appointed postmaster.

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It is believed that the original contract for the construction of the building at 500 Fremont Street, which seems to sit up higher than necessary, called for a fill of 0.4 feet, which was misread by the contractor, who brought in 4.0 feet of fill dirt. Needless to say, it has good drainage.

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## **Transportation**

When the railroad came in, the stage lines to Yellowstone National Park immediately began using Ashton as the starting point for trips to the western entrance to the park. The settlement of Ingling, about a mile north of Marysville, had a beet dump, an icehouse, a railroad wye, and the Davis boarding house. Before the line to West Yellowstone was completed, people bound for West Yellowstone could take the train to Ingling, stay in the boarding house overnight, and then take a stage for the rest of their journey.

The Oregon Short Line Railroad completed the West Yellowstone Branch in November 1907, and the first passenger train arrived there then.

By 1918, stages were available from Ashton to Ora, Squirrel, and other outlying areas. However, most of the facilities were removed in 1950 as diesel locomotives replaced steam locomotives, and the passenger trains were removed from the schedule. For some years the combined passenger and freight train between Ashton and Victor was called the “Gallop-in’ Goose.”

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The railroad line to West Yellowstone was abandoned in 1979. The line from Tetonian to Victor was abandoned in 1981, and from Tetonian to Ashton in 1990. That right-of-way was then taken over by the Idaho Department of Recreation for a “Rails to Trails” hiking and bicycling path.

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Louis Hammond started work at the round house about 1922 and became foreman.

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The stage from Ingling to West Yellowstone crossed the Marysville Bridge and continued north to Hatchery Ford, where it crossed the Henry’s Fork of the Snake River and then continued on to West Yellowstone.

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*Ashton train depot, about 1925.*

## Telephones

The residents of Green Hill, a settlement next to the Teton River, built the first telephone system in the area. The Fremont Independent Telephone Co. was designated as the phone company for Ashton. It was known as “the Farmer’s Line” and was extended into Lillian about 1912. It was connected to the line from Ashton in 1915. The Lee girls, Ada Whittemore, Lou Dorcheus, and Hazel Harris, were the first operators.

E. J. McKinley established Ashton’s first telephone exchange in the Cannon Building. The first operator “hello girl” was Ida Pulley. Other operators were Rose Marie “Burlap” Whittemore, Veda Cunningham, and Cecil Ezell. The first troubleshooter for the lines was Earl Kirkstetter. He installed the first line from Ashton to Jackson Lake and from Ashton to West Yellowstone.

The lines were “party lines” and required a different signal (i.e., one long ring and two short ones) for each different party, and were handled by the operator. In 1912, Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Co. bought the old Fremont County Telephone Co., and a new switchboard was installed in the Odd Fellows Building. In 1924 it was moved to a location one block south to the Virian Flats, and was later moved to the northwest corner of the Ashton Hotel. At one time it was managed by C. A. Snyder, and later by Cecil Ezell. Alma Christofferson, Mary Garz, and Helen Heinz were some of the operators at the time.



*Typical telephone operator in the 1920s.*

Telephones used the “number, please” system; calls went through the operator, who often knew how to locate the person being called. In 1936 the exchange was converted from magneto to battery. Fremont Telephone bought out Mountain States Telephone in 1936. In 1955 rotary dialing began; Ashton’s prefix was Olympic 2 (OL2), followed by four digits—all that were needed for many years. In 1961 the system converted to “all-number calling.” Ashton’s prefix was 652, and connecting to locations outside Ashton’s calling area required all seven. In 1971 push-button tone dialing began, requiring at least seven. Long-distance charges

## *Infrastructure*

applied outside Fremont County until 1988, when the calling area was expanded from Island Park to Malad, the largest “local” area in the United States.

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The telephone girl sits in her chair  
And listens to voices from everywhere.  
She hears all the gossip, she knows all the news,  
She knows who is happy and who has the blues.  
She knows all our sorrows, she knows all our joys,  
She knows every girl who is chasing the boys.  
She knows of our troubles, she knows of our strife.  
She knows every man who talks mean to his wife.  
She knows every time we are out with the boys.  
She hears the excuses each fellow employs.  
She knows every woman who has a dark past.  
She knows every man who's inclined to be fast.  
In fact, there's a secret 'neath each saucy curl  
Of that quiet, demure-looking telephone girl.  
If the telephone girl told all that she knows  
It would turn half our friends into bitterest foes.  
She could sow a small wind that would be a big gale,  
Engulf us in trouble and land us in jail.  
She could let go a story, which, gaining in force,  
Would cause half of our wives to sue for divorce,  
Get all of our churches mixed up in a fight,  
And turn all our days into sorrowing nights.  
In fact, she could keep all the town in a stew  
If she'd tell the tenth part of the things that she knew.  
Oh, really now, doesn't it make your head whirl  
When you think what you owe to that telephone girl?

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## **Electric Power**

In January 1913, three advisors of the Ashton & St. Anthony Power Company, led by N. N. Holm, visited Ashton and optioned both sides of the Snake River for a dam site. Until that time, Ashton had no source of electricity except a gasoline generator. They requested a franchise to supply power to the town, and the city council accepted that proposal. Later, Mr. Holm returned from a trip to California to find that the Utah Power and Light Co. were meeting that night with the Ashton board to ask for the franchise. He immediately went to Ashton. A heated discussion revealed that Holm's attorney had not filed the necessary papers, but the franchise was nevertheless granted to Holm according to their agreement.

Although they were harassed and threatened by the Utah Power & Light Co., the newly organized Ashton & St. Anthony Power Co. built the Ashton dam, a rock-filled structure 60 feet high and 500 feet long, starting in 1913 and finishing in 1915. McVicker and Woodburn hauled the rock for the construction of the dam and also hauled new generating units in 1923.

Warm River Power Co. took over the dam in 1923 and then sold to Utah Power and Light Co. in 1925. Fred Cowley was the superintendent in 1956. In 1957, Howard Larsen, Ben Bainbridge, and James Whittemore were honored for working for ten years without a serious accident.

### **Fall River R. E. C.**

In 1938 Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc., was organized at a meeting at the Howe Lumber Co. with George Amen as president. The first annual meeting was on November 15, 1939, when forty consumers signed up for membership. On April 27, 1939, a loan of \$80,000 was acquired to install 62 miles of power lines. The “A” section, Drummond, Squirrel, Greentimber, and the immediate area surrounding Ashton were energized in the spring of 1941. That fall the “B” section—the Rexburg, Ririe, and St. Anthony areas—were energized. The “C” Section—the outlying areas of Felt, Driggs, and Victor—were energized the following spring. Lines were built to Island Park and West Yellowstone in 1947 to replace the diesel generator there.

Charlie Causey was business manager and Walter Bratt was the first project superintendent. Lee A. Steck was general manager from 1941 until 1954. Bert Roberts was office manager from 1941 to 1954 and was then general manager until 1977. From then until early

1988, Calvin Wickham was general manager, followed by George Mangan and then by Dee Reynolds in 1990.

The Co-op’s first business office was located in a rented building next door to Howe Lumber. About 1954, the office was moved to the old Wynn’s Appliance store on the south side of Main Street. Later the office moved to the location of Charlie’s Cafe, where a new warehouse was added. In 1998, the Co-op moved into its new building on Highway 20, a mile south of Ashton.

There have been many changes since the business began, including changes in power suppliers such as the Utah Power & Light Co., the Bonneville Power Administration, the acquisition of the Teton Valley Power and Milling Co. and the Felt Hydro Plant in 1960, the devastation from the loss of the Teton Dam in 1976, and the building of the Island Park Reservoir Power Plant. The Co-op now serves almost 13,000 meters. It continues to be a tremendous asset for the community. What would we do without electricity?

## *Chapter 4*

### **CHURCHES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **Berean Baptist Church**

Pastor John Lovegrove of Gethsemane Baptist Church of Idaho Falls held midweek Bible studies in homes in Ashton for some months before the arrival of a full-time pastor.

Pastor Kenneth E. Ream, a graduate of Bob Jones University, arrived in Ashton in July 1972 for his first calling as a full-time pastor. The first Sunday service was held on August 6, 1972, in the American Legion Hall at the corner of Seventh and Idaho Street. Sunday School was at 10:00 A.M., Church at 11:00 A.M., and Evening Church at 7:30 P.M. In January 1974 the now "First Baptist Church" obtained a loan of \$14,500 and purchased the Lone Pine Motel on Ashton's Main Street.

Pastor Ken Dewey became pastor in 1978 and served through 1979.

In 1980, Pastor Phil Tubbs arrived and served as interim pastor until 1981, assisted by lay pastor Jack Morris. Pastor Al Price then took over as interim pastor until October 1981, when Pastor Ed Bonne was called as full time pastor.

Pastor Bonne and his family lived in a mobile home behind the church during his tenure. Under Pastor Price's leadership, the motel cabins were torn down, and with the help of men from Mt. View Baptist Church of Jackson, Wyoming, and Gethsemane Baptist Church of Idaho Falls, a new roof was installed on the church building. Pastor Bonne departed in April 1989 because of ill health.

No services were held until January 1991, when Pastor Wayne Tucker arrived to restart the church. He resigned in May 1997 to work for Northwest Baptist Missions, planting new churches in the Pacific Northwest. During his tenure, in September 1994, the name of the church was changed to “Berean Baptist Church.”

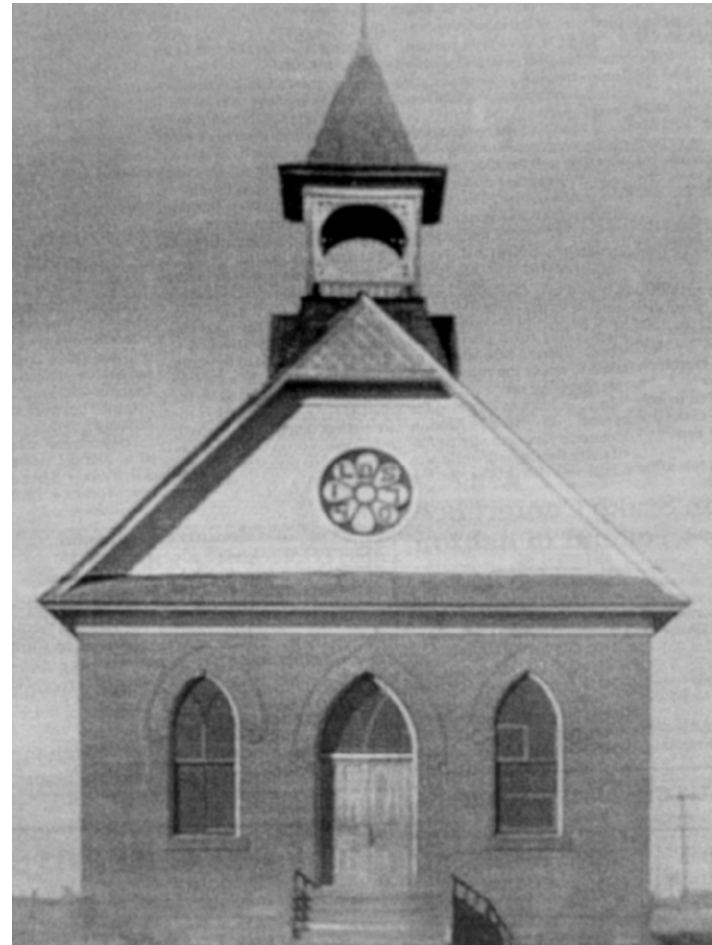
Pastor Brian Tousley became pastor in June 1997, leaving in March 2002. In 1998 a fellowship hall, classrooms, and kitchen were added. Pastor Dean McQuillan of Grace Baptist Church in Dillon, Montana, brought a crew that in three days framed, enclosed, and roofed the addition. With the help of Bob Gaston, other improvements were made on the church and grounds.

Pastor Myron Glatz was interim pastor from March 2002 until September 2004, driving each weekend from Twin Falls, often staying an entire week.

On September 26, 2004, Pastor Chris Leavel became pastor of Berean Baptist Church in Ashton.

### **LDS Church**

The Marysville LDS branch was organized in November 1891, and the first church building was finished in 1892, with James Henry Wilson as presiding elder. In March 1902, Hyrum Larson became presiding elder. The branch was changed to the Marysville Ward on June 28, 1903, with Parley Cutler as bishop.



*LDS red-brick chapel, 1907.*

## *Churches and Organizations*

The Vernon and Lodi wards were combined with the Ashton ward in 1907, with Marion Joseph Kerr as bishop. Bishop Kerr was born in 1861 with nothing more than a carpeted wagon box for a home. In 1893 he homesteaded at Ora and was presiding elder of the new Arcadia branch in 1895. Bishop Kerr was instrumental in building the first LDS church within the city limits of Ashton. The Ashton Townsite Co. donated the land for the church, and the little red brick church on the west corner of town was the result. Bricks for the building were purchased from a Mr. Johnson, who owned a brick factory just north of town. It was dedicated in 1907, and Kerr was called to be the bishop in the Ashton Ward, where he served for about one year before being called into the Yellowstone Stake presidency. In January 1909, Hyrum Rawlins Cunningham was chosen as bishop. He served until 1921, when Horace Arnold Hess was called as bishop. In June of 1920, the Ora Ward was incorporated with the Ashton Ward.

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The furnishings from the Ora Ward included the tall-backed bishop's chair, which was later used as the throne for green and gold balls.

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In January 1936, Floyd Blanchard was set apart as bishop, with Thomas Hammon Murdoch and Eugene Hess as counselors. In February 1936, Bishop H. A. Hess

was named Yellowstone Stake president; he served until 1945. It was during Bishop Blanchard's term of office that it was decided to build a new chapel, known as the White Church. It was started in 1940 on the corner of Fifth Street and Fremont Street. Before the building was completed, Bishop Blanchard was released, in November 1945, and Thomas H. Murdoch was appointed bishop of Ashton Ward. A highlight of the chapel dedication was the presentation of an oil painting of the Lord's Last Supper by Melva Richey. This painting now hangs in the chapel of the Ashton Stake Center.

The last meeting held in the little red brick building was on August 17, 1941. The building was then sold to the school district and used as a manual arts building. On October 12, 1941, the first meeting was held in the recreation hall of the new white church. The chapel was first used for ward meetings on February 1, 1942, but it was not dedicated until June 2, 1946. It was not long until the ward was divided. The west half of the ward remained the Ashton Ward, with Steven L. Osborne as bishop, and the east half became the Marysville Ward, with James Stringham as bishop.

In May 1947, the LDS Church purchased 312 acres north of Ashton for \$45,000 to be used as a stake farm. Working this farm has now been discontinued.





*Ashton Ward meetinghouse.*

## *Churches and Organizations*

The Farnum Ward, located east and south of Ashton, was incorporated into the Marysville Ward in January 1948. It was soon realized that a new building was needed. In December 1949, the Marysville and Ashton Ward bishoprics met to consider a building site. They initiated a logging project for the building. Eighty-eight men from the area spent six days cutting timber. They used 27 trucks, seven crawler tractors, three power saws, several jeeps, and numerous hand tools and procured 85 truckloads of timber for the proposed building. On August 11, 1950, a group assembled at the east end of Ashton's Main Street, and Bishop Stringham and Bishop Murdoch accomplished the groundbreaking. New ward boundaries were established on January 6, 1952, and all Marysville Ward meetings from that date were held in the new building, which was dedicated June 1, 1952.

In November of 1949, two Rexburg Stakes and the Yellowstone Stake purchased a portion of the J-Y Ranch, east of Ashton, from Jack Young for \$18,000 to be used as a girl's camp.

On May 30, 1954, the Ashton Seminary building was dedicated for the students of North Fremont High School. When the new North Fremont High School was built in 2004 east of town, a new seminary building was built nearby.

Ashton Ward finished the remodeling in 1969 after a fund-raising program. Sarah Allison suggested a "Near

New Store," which was begun rent free in an empty building near the east end of the 500 block, with donated merchandise and donated labor from the members. It was very successful and led to the establishment of the Odd Fellows "Flea Market."

The remodeled building under the direction of Bishop Richard J. Clark was dedicated on September 21, 1969. Bishop Clark served until June 30, 1974, at which time Ashton Ward was divided and Leland Edgar Clark was called as bishop of Ashton First Ward and Dean Green as bishop of Ashton Second Ward.

On February 24, 1974, the name of Yellowstone Stake was changed to St. Anthony Idaho Stake, and then, on May 18, 1975, the St. Anthony Idaho Stake was divided and the Ashton Idaho Stake was created. Bishop H. Eugene Hess was called to serve as stake president. The first stake conference of the Ashton Idaho Stake was held August 17, 1975.

On October 31, 1977, a groundbreaking ceremony was held on a six-acre site on the northwest corner of the city of Ashton for the construction of the new Ashton Idaho Stake Center, which was dedicated by Elder L. Tom Perry on July 22, 1979.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 29, 1987, just north of Ashton's Pineview Cemetery, to build a new three-ward building, and on April 10, 1988, the first church services were held there. The building was dedicated on October 23, 1988.

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A concrete slab inscribed

19 FARNUM WARD 09

LDS

was above the front door of the Farnum Ward building. After the building was demolished, Dick Egbert moved the slab to Lyon's Point near the confluence of Conant Creek and Fall River. It now holds a place of honor there in remembrance of Brigham Murdoch (father of Katie Murdoch Lyon), who served for many years as bishop of the Farnum Ward.

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After eleven years, it was decided that the building was too small, so a remodeling project was announced. On May 23, 1999, the three wards housed in that building began holding meetings at the Ashton Stake Center along with Ashton Second Ward and Chester Ward. The dedication of the remodeled building was held in August 2000 by President Dee M. Reynolds and is now home to the First, Third, and Fourth Wards. Those wards that now comprise the Ashton Idaho Stake include the First, Second, Third, Fourth, Chester, Island Park, and West Yellowstone Montana, with summer-time Branches in Yellowstone Park.

## **Methodist Church**

The first Methodist Church in the area was located at Vernon. The first church services were held in the schoolhouse, with Harley J. Adams as minister. Construction on a new church building began in 1898 with planed lumber hauled by team and wagon from the Arangee Mill in Island Park. It was finished in 1905. They sometimes had their own minister but also shared a minister with the Ashton church. The ministers sometimes came on horseback from St. Anthony. One inexperienced minister attempted to cross the river in the wrong place and was drowned.

In 1908, under the leadership of the Rev. A M. Lambert, the Methodist Church was organized in Ashton. A building made of bricks from "Brickyard Hill," about a quarter mile west of town, was erected at the corner of Fifth and Idaho. A Sunday School, under the leadership of W. L. Robinson, and the Ladies Aid, with Mrs. Al Fullerton as president, were important parts of the church. A year later, Rev. L. F. Vernon became the pastor, followed by Rev. Mark White, Rev. R. G. Williams, Rev. J. V. Maxey, and Rev. G. E. Nagnum, each serving for three years or less. In 1910, a parsonage was built next to the church on Idaho Street. The Epworth League was organized in 1915, which helped bring about an increase of the church. In 1921, under the leadership of Rev. B. F. Meredith, two rooms were added to the church, a full basement was put in, a furnace was installed, and new

## *Churches and Organizations*

pews were purchased. The Utility Club sponsored a dinner in 1929 and paid off the debt to the Mission Board. Rev. J. J. Fleming assisted in these projects. In 1931, Rev. C. C. Callahan served, followed by Rev. P. C. Bent. The Young People's Sunday School and Social Union groups were very active. In 1933, the Study Club, under the direction of Rev. and Mrs. Coulter, purchased the amber Cathedral Windows.

Under the leadership of Miss Eva W. Brown during the early 1940s a substantial gain was made in membership. In 1945, Rev. Luscher assisted in the remodeling of the parsonage. Also in 1945, the younger women of the church organized the 20-40 Circle, and the "Advance" program was begun. Their projects under Rev. Wm. Frank, who came in 1946, included new furnishings for the church kitchen and an oil furnace. Under Rev. V. I. Taylor, who became pastor in 1948, the 20-40 Circle sponsored a Vacation Bible School. The Senior Circle added many appliances in the parsonage. A Hammond electric organ was purchased, which added a great deal to the services. The Florence Wesleyan Guild was organized in 1948 to carry on the Missionary program. The Rev. George Allen came in 1950, and many new members were added to the rolls. During this time the "Methodist Men" organization was formed.

Rev. H. C. Newman came in 1952, and the building fund for the much-needed new church was started. A choir was formed under the direction of Mrs. New-

man. During the summer of 1954, there was no minister except guest and lay ministers, including Rev. Edward Harms. Rev. George Weber came in 1955 and continued with plans for the new church building. The old church burned down in 1955. Rev. Mervyn Shay came in June 1956, and the parsonage was moved to a new location; the remains of the old burned church were carried away. The new church was dedicated in 1962. Rev. Tom Hill was pastor from 1958 to 1964, followed by Rev. Woodrow Harris until 1969, Rev. Allen Lambert until 1972, Rev. Harold Black until 1976, when Dr. Emmett Shortreed came, followed by Mark Rolfsema, Rev. Grace Drake, Robin Yim, Kent Stangland, Judy Johnson, Denny Deizel, Martha Oldham, and now Jan Barber.

The Utility Club was organized in January 1915, with Mrs. Paul Stone as president. They raised funds to fence and beautify the Pine View Cemetery, sent knitted items to the Red Cross at the time of World War I, donated food to the Children's Home in Boise, donated a motion-picture machine to the school, and donated to the Methodist Church, the Ashton Memorial Hospital, and many other charitable organizations.



*Zion Lutheran Church, about 1940.*

## *Churches and Organizations*

### **Zion Lutheran Church**

The Zion Lutheran Church was formed in Squirrel in 1901. The first pastor was Rev. F.A.C. Meyer, a student on vicarage. He was followed by Rev. Linse on vicarage for one year in 1903. He lived at the Reimann ranch and held school for the Lutheran children. Pastor Hudloff of Butte, Montana, confirmed the first catechumens' class, which included Fred Lenz, Juluis Garz, Otto Sturm, Seraphina Ploerer, Carl Reimann, and Henry Reimann, there in May 1904. The first resident pastor was Rev. F.A.C. Meyers, who organized Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church on May 19, 1907. He donated land in Squirrel for the site of the first church, which was completed that year.

Subsequent pastors were Rev. J. G. Toenjes, Paul Schaus, F. C. Braun, Rev. J. M. Kempf, Rev. H. Westendorf, and H. A. Kriefall, who served as vacancy pastor. Next was R. C. Muhly, who brought growth and established a new congregation under the name of Redeemer Lutheran. Under his leadership, new churches were built in 1936, both for Zion Lutheran in Squirrel and for Redeemer Lutheran in Ashton. Rev. Paul Koppelman, Rev. H. C. Streufert, and Rev. R. Reith served Redeemer Lutheran. In 1938, Pastor N. E. Day was installed as pastor of the combined Zion and Redeemer parishes. In 1943, a parsonage was provided in Ashton. In 1947, Rev. Paul E. Riedel was installed.

In November 1950, the Zion and Redeemer parishes were merged into one congregation, retaining the name Zion Lutheran. Work began on a new church building in 1951, with the cornerstone being laid and the site dedicated in 1953. A parsonage site just south of the church was also acquired. Rev. Riedel left in 1952, and Rev. W. Rist served as vacancy pastor until 1953. Other vacancy pastors were Rev. Toehlke, Lester Muhly, George Ploetz, and Hugo Hein. Pastors serving since that time include Rev. Ralph Theimer, Rev. Martin Heinicke, Richard Laux, Kent Stenzel, John Fieirabend, Ken Schauer, and Bruce Kolasch.

### **Christian Fellowship Church**

In 1967, Richard Laux came to Ashton to be the pastor of the Zion Lutheran church. He later established the Ashton Christian Fellowship in 1977. At first, the small flock rented the American Legion Hall, which had been a Lutheran church many years before. In 1979, they were able to obtain the historic railroad depot building at no charge. They moved it to four and a half acres of donated land on the north side of Ashton, used chain saws to cut the depot in half, and then moved each half to its new location. Pastor Laux said it took about four cases of Elmer's Glue to put it back together again. The original building was 117 by 24 feet, but in 1991 a 40-by-40-foot worship area was added, and they have plans for further expansion.

The church started with a membership of about

eight families but has grown to about forty-five families. With only a small flock, Pastor Laux had to take a job as a drug and alcohol counselor with various agencies, including the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, until the early 1990s to provide a living for his family.

The Fellowship has women's, men's, and children's ministries, and a church school on Sunday. Pastor Laux's wife, Ellen, teaches the "Girls for Christ" group. She also teaches a Bible study group each Wednesday morning. "God's Great Guys," one of the youth groups, is taught by Pastor Laux, who also teaches a Bible study group on Tuesday mornings. Rev. Laux said, "We're happy to be part of the community."

### **Study Club**

The Study Club was organized in 1910 by Mrs. R. D. Merrill, Mrs. J. Harshbarger, and Mrs. Florence Owen. It was federated in 1912, and the women of the community were invited to join. They met in members' homes and had a program and luncheon at each meeting. The club gave them an opportunity to socialize and work for their community.

A business meeting was held each time, strictly following Roberts' Rules of Order. The members of the Study Club were involved in civic affairs. The club took responsibility for organizing and maintaining the Ashton Public Library in 1914. During World War I they took part in Red Cross work. A card party in 1917

earned forty dollars for the Red Cross and also made "comfort kits" for the Ashton boys serving overseas.

In 1919, when the Village of Ashton bought a half interest in the cemetery from Marysville, the Study Club raised money for the fence and chose the name of "Pineview Cemetery." They helped with the annual Armistice Day program held at the Opera House. They held programs, dances, and fundraisers to entertain the townspeople and raise money for community projects. They bought trees for the Ashton Elementary School grounds, organized the Elementary School Library, and donated to the Ashton Memorial Hospital. In 1933, the Study Club purchased the amber Cathedral Windows for the Methodist Church.

The Study Club no longer serves Ashton, but it is unclear when they disbanded. Newspaper articles dated December 16, 1965, show that they were still functioning at that time.

### **American Legion**

The Ashton American Legion, Post 89, received its official charter in February 1919. The first post commander was William Waugh. Other post commanders include Turner Sparkman, Ott Harris, Bill Garz, John T. "Jack" Lyon, Niels Knudsen, D. F. Taylor, Dewey Hayes, Randall Howe, Ben Bainbridge, Max Warsany, Hal Harigfeld, Charlie Harris, Lorenz Schaefer, John Blackburn, Kay Reimann, Earl Barker, Fred Stephens, Steve

## *Churches and Organizations*

Card, Warren Moon, John Tanner, Perry Grube, Marvin Tighe, Richard Huntsman, Bob Kiefer, Jim Harrell, Don Ghormley, Bob Gaston, Melvin Atwood, Claude Daniels, and Glade Lyon, who served as Seventh District commander, department vice commander for Area C, and five years on the National Internal Affairs Commission.

The organization has been active in community affairs. They assist the wives, widows, and children of veterans in need, hold graveside services for deceased veterans, maintain a brick memorial in Pineview Cemetery to honor all deceased veterans, co-sponsored the flagpole at the new high school, hold memorial services at six area cemeteries on Memorial Day, give scholarships to high school seniors, sponsor high school junior boys to Gem Boys State, conduct an annual oratorical contest, work with the fifth-grade teachers to teach flag etiquette to their students, and produce the community birthday calendar.

### **American Legion Auxiliary**

The Ashton American Legion Auxiliary Unit 89 was organized January 21, 1922, with Mrs. D. S. Whittemore as president. The permanent charter was granted January 5, 1923. These female partners of American Legion members work closely with the American Legion. Each year they sponsor high school girls to Syringa Girls State (which was originated by Luella Baum, an

Ashton member), sell poppies to raise money for the Veterans Hospital, and are involved in many other community events.

### **Veterans of Foreign Wars**

In 1990, the FW was granted a charter, with John Tanner as commander, Harvey Sorenson as first vice commander, Leon Palmer as junior vice, and Brian Wilkening as quartermaster. Their two main sources of revenue are county warrants and a share of the "Cowboy Poets" presentation in St. Anthony. Owning no post home, they have met in several places, including Linda's Restaurant, Richard Huntsman's home, and Trail's Inn Restaurant. Commanders have been John Tanner, Richard Huntsman, Brian Wilkening, and Melvin Atwood. The post sponsors or participates in the community Easter Egg Hunt and the Cowboy Poets presentation. It also awards four \$200 scholarships annually to local students; donates to the National Home and the National Children's Home; participates in the poppy drive; has a presence at Memorial Day, July 4th, and Veterans Day ceremonies; co-sponsored the flagpole at the new high school; and has donated to many other worthy causes.



### **Lions Club**

The Ashton Lions Club was chartered February 5, 1941. Some of the members were Lloyd Compton, Darwin F. Taylor, Rulon Hemming, E. W. Lupton, A. R. Clouse, A. A. Krueger, W. A. Lansberry, Jos. D. Klamt, T. J. Timmons, E. A. Hunt, Hale Hubbard, J. L. Whittemore, W. O. Harris, Arvid Glover, and Murray Baum. Projects included sending the *Ashton Herald* to all area servicemen in the Pacific during World War II, buying uniforms for North Fremont's football team, helping buy band uniforms, a lighting project for the soft-ball diamond, and so on.

### **Lady Lions**

After returning from a Lion's Club convention in Sun Valley, Una Stringham, Irene Harker, Donna Zundel, Gertrude Hill, Marie Martindale, Mildred Jones, and Gwen Gygli organized the Ashton Lady Lions Club on December 2, 1952, electing Gertrude Hill as president. They sponsored many community projects, including a Christmas decorating contest; donations to cancer, polio, and other worthy causes; helping send girls to Girls State; clean-up week at the school library; and many others. One of the most successful was the story hour for pre-school youngsters.

### **Rotary Club**

The Ashton Rotary Club was chartered on June 26, 1956, with 23 members. Ralph W. Hunter was the first president, and H. S. Stewart was vice president. Other officers were Grant Jardine, secretary, J. H. VanDeusen, treasurer, and Mark Anderson, sergeant-at-arms. The Rotary Club has made many contributions to the community, improving the city park, helping with the swimming pool, painting the medical clinic building, and furnishing a community Christmas tree each year. Other projects have been building an amphitheater at Warm River Campground, erecting a shelter in the city park, helping fund football and basketball scoreboards, and giving scholarships to deserving students. Their foreign-exchange-student programs and Junior Miss programs have been very successful. The Rotary Anns, the women's part of the organization, has added greatly to their success.

### **Masonic Lodge**

The first authorized meeting of Ashton Lodge #73, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, was held in Ashton on February 26, 1914. The elected officers who presided at the meeting were Fred A. Wilkie, worshipful master; William A. Upham, senior warden; Ole A. Brothen, junior warden; John A. McDonald, treasurer; and Fred M. Schnedler, secretary.

## *Churches and Organizations*

Eastern Star began in August 1917. Gem chapter's first worthy matron was Emma Foote Fuller, worthy patron was Clarence M. Mercer, and assistant matron was Effie Mercer. The charter was dated June 1918. The members made cookies and knitted clothing for the World War II effort. Masons and Eastern Star moved into their present location in 1940.

Meetings were held in the hall commonly known as the Krueger Building until 1940, when the lodge purchased the present building from the estate of Fred Landre. The lodge then bought Lot 8 of Block 46 located west of HG Lumber and still owns it. The building housed a cafe on the main floor and had several rooms that were rentals on the second floor. The Lodge remodeled the second floor and held their meetings there while continuing to rent out the main floor as a restaurant. On July 1, 1948, the Masonic Lodge gave a six-year lease to Glen and Evelyn Pond on the main floor and basement for a cafe. After the lodge quit renting the main floor as a cafe, it was remodeled into a banquet room and kitchen.

In 2002, the members of Ashton Lodge #73 AF & AM merged with St. Johns Lodge #52 AF & AM located at Shelley, where the Ashton Masonic Lodge members now attend. Membership in Ashton Lodge #73 AM & FM at the time of the merger was 57 members.

## **Odd Fellows**

Lodge #88 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows was organized in March 1906, and the charter was signed October 17, 1906, by Hugh H. Rankin, H. G. Fuller, N. L. Darling, William Zimmerman, G. X. Doherty, George Harrigfeld, and A. C. Langley. Mr. Fuller was the first grand noble, and R. D. Jennings was elected secretary. The cornerstone of their building was laid June 20, 1907, on lots which had been donated to them by the Ashton Townsite Co. with the proviso that it house the Ashton State Bank. The building was built in 1906 by Smoky Johnson, with William Baker doing the brick work. There was a lumber and hardware store on the east side of the ground floor. The meeting rooms on the top floor, the Social Hall, have been available for many dinners and dances. They had their own band that played up and down the valley. Around 1913, a building was added to the east side of the lodge hall and over the years had many occupants, including Tony's Tire Shop, the Utah Power and Light Co. offices, and the office of Dr. Ed Hargis. This building deteriorated and was destroyed about 1960. Over the years, the first floor of the main building has housed many businesses, including a hardware store, the *Ashton Herald* newspaper, the U.S. Post Office, a harness and shoe repair shop, Fitch Photo shop, a dentist's office, and Keith's Plumbing, followed by H. & S. (Hammond and Smith) Plumbing, Utah Power and Light Co.

office, Anna Moore's beauty shop, Hair Fair, the Flea Market, Stanley's Furniture Manufacturing, and Arrowhead Realty. The meeting room on the top floor was the scene of regular Friday night dances during the 1930s.

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Drew Whittemore came in 1912 and rented the basement of the Odd Fellows Building for his concrete business. His name is still visible stamped into many of Ashton's sidewalks.

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The ladies auxiliary, the Rebekahs, with Winifred Rankin as chair, was organized in October 1922. The Ladies Auxiliary, Ashton No. 2, of Canton Snake River No. 18, Patriarch Militant I.O.O.F, Ashton Idaho was the complete title of the ladies' auxiliary that was organized in 1922, with Winifred Rankin president, Martha Lans-

berry vice president, Rosa Marquardt secretary, and Tillis Simmermacher treasurer, but has been inactive since 1931.

The meeting room on the top floor was the scene of regular Friday night dances during the 1930s. The Rebekahs' Flea Market, a store run with volunteer help and donations, has been a tremendous asset to the community for many years. They sometimes rent out the space to various charitable organizations that then take over the operation, including the donated merchandise, and are able to add to their own finances. Organizations operating the Flea Market are the Daughters of Utah Pioneers, the Ashton Christian Fellowship, the Upper Valley Bible Church, the American Legion Auxiliary, and other nonprofit organizations.



*Dr. Hargis (left) in front of his office, about 1910.*

## *Chapter 5*

### **RECREATION**

There was plenty of opportunity for recreation around Ashton. Besides the fun that people made for themselves with barn dances, swimming holes, home-made games and food, and invented games using whatever kids could find, other social and cultural events helped define the growing town. For instance, it is noted that in July 1906, a circus, Eiler's Big R. R. Show, came to town and performed "Rip Van Winkle."

#### **Opera House**

The Ashton Townsite Co. sold the site of the Opera House to Charles Bartlett in 1906, and Murphy and Melton were clearing the land of sagebrush and beginning construction in 1909. W. J. Anderson was the carpenter. E. M. Varin was the manager in 1910 and

bought the lot from James Melton in 1912, who got it from Walter Melton in 1909 after he acquired it from Charles P. Bartlett, who bought it from the townsite in 1906. In 1920, the building reverted back to the Townsite Co. and was purchased by C. C. Moore and H. G. Fuller, who owned the building for ten years. The American Legion acquired title to the building in 1940 and used it for a meeting hall for the next 34 years. The American Legion made extensive changes to the building, including adding a kitchen on the north. They later traded it to Murray Baum for the old Lutheran Church at the corner of Seventh and Idaho, and he used it for a meeting hall for his Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Baum sold to Sam Earle a year later for storage for his Ford dealership. He later sold it to Lynn Hossner, who

## *Recreation*

did extensive remodeling and currently has it available for rent.

Belle Lupton, a local music teacher, produced many plays and musical events there. Mrs. Lupton trained at Ricks College, the Chicago Musical College, and Chicago Art Institute. She served as president of the State Federation of Music Clubs and taught music in many schools in southeastern Idaho.

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Belle Wood Lupton wrote the following song:

Tall and stately lodge poles that reach toward the sky,  
Cool and shady trout streams gushing swiftly by;  
Gushing swiftly by in Idaho.  
Long and shady highways wending through the trees,  
High and rugged mountains, snow caps on them freeze,  
Snow caps on them freeze in Idaho.

*Chorus:*

Sweet memories of Idaho  
Of lovely Idaho  
Of friendly Idaho  
O sing the praise of Idaho,  
The Gem State of the West!

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The Opera House has been used for weddings, funerals, dances, square-dance lessons, boxing matches, roller-skating, school assemblies and lyceums, basketball practices, auctions, sportsman's jamborees, gun club meetings, community events, and plays put on by

traveling Chautauqua companies many years ago. The Chautauqua companies would send a woman director-producer to town, and she would recruit people to take part in the plays. At least two marriages to Ashton men resulted. Madison Klick married Carl Reimann, and attractive Josie married Max Warsany, but they divorced after about six weeks.

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Professional boxers would come to town and fight anyone in the crowd for \$30. Vern Calonge, Wilbur Dixon, and Ivan McGavin were three who fought in the ring. Cal Smith also boxed against the professionals and held the Intermountain Heavyweight Championship of the Pacific Northwest (although he was actually a welterweight) for several years.

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## **Golf**

In 1933, the Ashton Golf Club acquired title to Blocks 31 and 32, the two city blocks north of Main Street at the west edge of the city. They maintained that title and had a golf course there until 1947.

Carl Bates purchased and logged 80 acres of timber just south of the Green Timber Road next to the National Forest Boundary. After logging the merchantable timber, he turned it into a nine-hole golf course with a club house. He also has a bar, rental units, and lots for sale. He named it Timberline Golf Course.

### **City Park**

Ashton developed its city park a block and a half north of Main Street between First and Second Streets. The city also maintains a baseball diamond a couple of blocks east of the park.

The earlier ballpark at the west edge of Ashton was an early-day center for community sports. Each community had its own baseball team, and they played regular games with each other. There was an oval track around the ball diamond for horse racing. The ball diamond was on the south section of Block 33.

### **Swimming Pool**

The Ashton Swimming Pool was built in 1967 in the southwest corner of Ashton's city park, after the City of Ashton provided a 99- year lease on the property where it sits. Merrill Evans, manager of Bestway Building Center, headed the North Fremont Swimming Pool Association that applied for a \$30,000 loan and raised another \$7,500 in donations from Ashton businesses, organizations, and residents to construct it. It ranged from 9'6" deep where a diving board was installed to 1'6" deep where the kiddies' pool was at the other end. Clair Allison was the first manager. Some other managers have included Diane Rhodes, Patti Atchley, and Jan Stronks.

In 1983, an earthquake near Challis, Idaho, damaged the pool, causing it to leak. A citizens' committee raised

\$25,000 to have the pool repaired by Bunker Pool and Spa of Pocatello.

### **Tennis Court**

In 1976, the American Legion, as a bicentennial project, pushed for a tennis court. With cooperation from the Idaho State Parks and Recreation Department, the City of Ashton, and the Fremont School District, it was built on school property and was therefore the property of the school district. George Sadoris, a member of the American Legion, was an avid player who gave lessons to many of the local students.

### **Movies**

The first motion picture shown in Ashton was by Freeman Humes in a tent at the rear of the Cannon store. George Swartz and William Swanstrum built the Star Theater across the street. The Ashton Theater was operated by George Harrigfeld, and later by a group of Ashton businessmen.

Dick Heinz tells of the filming of Paramount's "The Unconquered," starring Gary Cooper and Paulette Goddard, in 1946. Many local people, including Cleon Cordon and Bus Gunter, were made up as Indians, complete with war paint. Seventy-eight doubles and extras and Cecil B. DeMille, the director, were on location. A plank roadway was built for some distance upstream

## *Recreation*

from Upper Mesa Falls for the cameras to run on. In the movie, a canoe chase of the white explorers by the Indians started on Fall River but suddenly changed to the Snake River so the movie characters would have Mesa Falls to contend with. An overhanging branch that took them to a cave behind the falls saved the stars' doubles.

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The story is told that a color movie camera was lost in Fall River but never recovered.

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### **Ashton Regatta**

The Ashton Regatta held in August each year and sponsored by the Ashton Chamber of Commerce brings lots of participation from nearby residents. The rule that anything that floats is eligible brings inner tubes, milk- container rafts, canoes, and bicycle-powered contraptions. The race begins at the confluence of Warm River and the Henry's Fork of the Snake and ends at Jim's Dock north of Ashton.

Jim's Dock was a private financial venture (near the old Wendell Bridge) of Jim Merrick, who rented water-skiing and boating equipment and sold food and drink. For several summers in the 1960s, swimming lessons were taught there in a section logged off from the river. The dock is now maintained by Fremont County.

### **Archery**

In the 1960s, a group of archers built a "Field Archery Course" on the Ashton Hill. It had good usage for several years until the State Highway Department closed the road leading east from Highway 20 to it. Dan Whitmore put an archery range on the second floor of his building but was never able to get the participation he hoped for.

### **Bowling**

Lynn Allison remembers a "duck pin" bowling alley, using smaller balls and smaller pins than regular bowling alleys, that was installed near the center of the south side of the 500 block in the late 1930s and was very popular for a few years. The duck-pin alleys used smaller balls without holes and smaller pins than regular bowling alleys. Automatic pinsetters had not yet been invented, so local teenagers set the pins. Its demise was probably due to the loss of bowlers to the war effort.

Bowling became a popular sport, with many four-man teams going to St. Anthony to bowl, so Joe Rankin built an eight-lane bowling alley half a block south of Main Street on State Highway 20. It was a hit with the local people until personal problems required him to shut it down. It was then turned into a grocery store by Dennis Nichols, who moved from his location at



the corner of Sixth and Main and later sold to Dave Thatcher, who later sold to his son-in-law Dave “Jake” Jacobsen, a most civic-minded citizen.

### **Hunting**

Hunting has always been good and is a favorite sport in the area. The abundance of mule deer, elk, moose, and—since their introduction into the area about 1975—white-tailed deer, has provided sport and much-appreciated meat to the residents. The harsh winters and heavy snows drive the elk out of their summer home in Yellowstone Park to the sagebrush deserts to the west. There are brown and grizzly bear, cougar, an occasional bison, and rarely a bighorn sheep. There are a few antelope in the western area.

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An account of early Greentimber says that until 1903 prairie chickens, sage hens, and curlews were so plentiful they clouded the sky.

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Sage grouse and sharptail grouse are plentiful in the sagebrush desert, and ruffed grouse and blue grouse, both locally called “pine hens,” are found in the Targhee Forest, and hungarian partridge in farming areas. Hunting for ducks and geese is good. Some hunting for sandhill cranes and wild turkeys is allowed.

### **Targhee National Forest**

The Targhee National Forest was created on July 1, 1908, when President Theodore Roosevelt combined the previously established Henry’s Lake Forest Reserve and part of the Yellowstone Forest Reserve for a total of almost one and a half million acres. In 1910, nearly 650,000 acres of the south portion were eliminated, and 60,000 acres were restored to the public domain and taken up as homesteads. The remainder became the Palisades National Forest, which in 1917 was once again combined with the Targhee, which was named in honor of a Bannock Indian chief. The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe has ancestral treaty rights to use the forest.

The headquarters of the Targhee National Forest District, originally called Hallie Park Ranger District, has always been in Ashton. The winter headquarters for the Porcupine District has also been in Ashton, moving 15 miles to the east in the summer.

The first timber sale on the Targhee was to Sam Stoddard in 1905. Logs were skidded out to wagons and hauled to the mill or railroad by work oxen and horses. The timber was made into lumber or used for power poles, potato cellars, corral poles, fence posts, house logs, paper pulp, or firewood.

The Targhee Forest has been a major factor in the development of the Ashton area because of the multiple uses it affords: hunting, fishing, hiking, floating,

## *Recreation*

camping, snowmobiling, sight-seeing, logging, and grazing. Thousands of cattle and sheep use the forest for grazing during the summer.

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The annual cattle drive in the fall, moving cattle from their summer range in the Targhee Forest through the Main Street of Ashton to the winter range to the west, is a spectacle enjoyed by residents and tourists alike.

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### **Mesa Falls**

About 16 miles north of Ashton are Upper Mesa Falls, which falls about 114 feet, and Lower Mesa Falls, with a fall of about 65 feet. These have always been an attraction, particularly since the improvement of Highway 47 in recent years and its designation as the Mesa Falls Scenic Byway.

The Big Falls Lodge was built in about 1912 as an office for the Mesa Power Co. but saw much use as a lodging house for tourists on their way to Yellowstone. There were plans to build a dam and power generator there, but that was never accomplished. Montana Power purchased the area in 1936, but again the planned dam was never built. Over the years, the lodge was used for a restaurant, dance hall, and Scout camp.

The Forest Service acquired the area in 1986 through a land exchange. Within the next three years, the Forest

Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation restored the lodge, built pathways to the river's edge, and listed the lodge on the National Register of Historic Places. Lower Mesa Falls is one mile downriver to the south, and the Grandview Overlook there, built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. in the 1930s, affords an impressive view of the falls. The Grandview Forest Service Campground is located there.

The Warm River Forest Service Campground, nine miles east of Ashton, is a popular camping spot on Warm River, as is the Cave Falls Campground, 20 miles east of Ashton.

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Gloy Lyon told of staying at the Big Falls Lodge on the first night of her honeymoon in 1921 and being terrified of the grizzled old desk clerk.

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The river can be deadly. Some years ago, two sailors stationed at the Atomic Energy site near Idaho Falls decided to float the river. They were cautioned to put in below the falls, so they did. But they put their boat in below Upper Mesa Falls, and when they came to the brink of Lower Mesa Falls, one of them swam to the bank, but the other one rode the boat over and lost his life.

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One time a father, and a mother with a small child in her arms, stood at the brink of Lower Mesa Falls. The father turned and

stepped back to take their picture, but when he turned back around, they were no longer there.

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## **Fishing**

The Henry's Fork of the Snake River is world renowned for its fishing. Local residents have always known that Fall River is a better fishing stream, but they don't tell. When a tourist wants to know where to fish, the locals point to Henry's Fork. Marv Tighe, one of the world's great trout fishermen, stood on the bank of Fall River and declared, "This is the best fishing spot in Fremont County, and Fremont County is the best fishing in Idaho, and Idaho is the best fishing in the United States."

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On the opening day of fishing season 1998, Melanie Rivas caught a 19-inch, two-and-a-half-pound trout on Fall River in water her grandfather said was too high and too muddy to be fished.

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The Idaho Department of Fish and Game, since 1920, has added tremendously to the quality of fishing by raising fish in the Ashton Hatchery, a mile south and a mile west of Ashton. The hatchery produces about

50,000 pounds of fish a year, including rainbow trout, rainbow/cutthroat hybrid trout, brook trout, brown trout, and grayling, most of which are planted in the waters of Eastern Idaho. Grayling are also stocked into mountain lakes all across Idaho. Progress at the facility has been continuous, from the manager's residence, built in 1936, to the workshop/garage finished in 2005. In 1983, the beautiful spring pond had to be drained because of many problems, including the spread of fish disease.

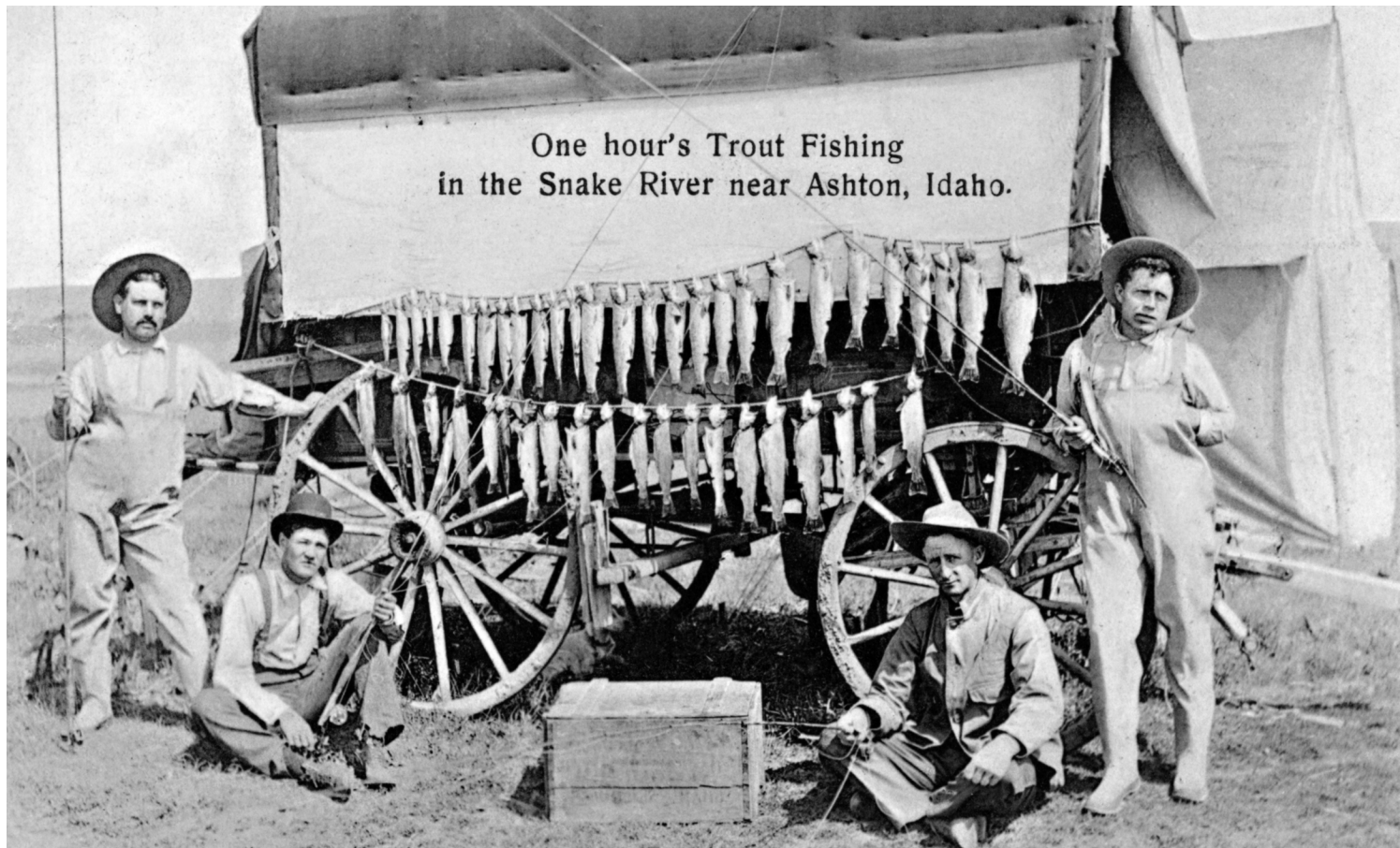
The Warm River Hatchery was leased from the U.S. Forest Service and operated by the Department of Fish and Game from 1953 until 1973. Although Warm River Springs is one of the largest water suppliers in the state, the hatchery was closed because of low fish production, lack of space for ponds, and poor winter access.

The Henry's Lake Hatchery provides 1,200,000 eggs per year for use in other hatcheries.

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Hark "Snick" Misseldine for many years carried fish in a backpack to Packsaddle Lake and other lakes and streams deep in the mountains of Eastern Idaho. He told of seeing an osprey take a trout from a mountain lake, and then he watched as a bald eagle tried to steal it in mid-air. They fought until it dropped back into the lake and then flew to different trees and sat and screamed at each other.

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*There is no proof that the photo on this Teton Pharmacy Post Card was taken near Ashton, but the postcard does say so.*

### **Bear Gulch Ski Basin**

In April 1938, Targhee National Forest ranger Rufus Hall and junior forester Tippetts looked at four potential resort sites along Yellowstone Highway 191, with the Bear Gulch site being the top selection. The next year, Alf Engen, a world-class skier from Norway, helped lay out the first runs that became known as the Bear Cat, the Dipper, and the Teddy Bear. A crew from the Civilian Conservation Corps cleared the slopes and constructed a commissary building at the top of the hill.

Union Pacific was interested in the project and may have paid for the survey work because it was near the rail line to West Yellowstone, Montana. During the 1930s, this passenger service to Yellowstone Park was one of Union Pacific's most-used tourist lines.

Originally Bear Gulch was a nonprofit corporation between the Ashton Dog Derby Association, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Ashton Ski Club. Members of the Dog Derby Association included W. O. Harris, chairman; Rulon Hemming; Robert Timmons; and J. D. Klamt. Bud Clouse operated it.

The first ride up the hill was on two 5-by-16 flat-bottomed sleds linked by a cable that went to the top of the hill and was powered by a Caterpillar engine with cables wrapped around large drums. One sled was pulled to the top as the other sled was let back down. Shifting gears at the engine reversed the process. About 14 skiers sitting side by side on the sled could be taken

at a time. This lift was affectionately known as the "Red Assed Lift." In the fall of 1940, a rope tow was installed on the Teddy Bear so skiers could be pulled to the top.

In 1942, the hill was closed because of World War II but was reopened in 1945, when the Forest Service issued a permit to Bear Gulch Ski Basin, Inc., whose members were Harry Lewies, Dan Reimann, Art Anderson, and Gilman Fletcher.

In 1948, the toboggan lift was replaced by a T-bar lift. The Grizzly run was cleared, and a lodge with a large kitchen and huge double fireplace was built. Downstairs were restrooms, wood storage, and an apartment. The original rope tow was installed behind the lodge, powered by a surplus GMC truck.

Night skiing was offered for several years on the Teddy Bear run as lights were installed along the edge of the trees and on poles out in the middle. A shack near the lodge housed the generator that powered the lodge and the night lights. A double chair-lift manufactured by a firm in Burley was installed along the side of the Dipper run when Fall River Electric extended its power lines to the area in 1965. Grooming in the early days was done by volunteers lining up to ski-pack an individual run; later, double-tracked Ski-doo's towed a wooden frame with chicken wire suspended and stapled along the sides. Larger snow machines such as Tucker, Thiokol, and Bombardier were used later.

In the late 1960s, Grand Targhee Resort east of

## *Recreation*

Driggs opened. Bear Gulch was well known for its intermediate and expert terrain, and even though it was small and had only a 600-foot vertical drop, it had been the premier ski area in eastern Idaho. Grand Targhee with its high elevation and 2000-foot vertical drop brought a world-class ski area to eastern Idaho, taking many of the skiers who had patronized Bear Gulch.

In the fall of 1970, the resort was purchased by Bruce Black, Ernie Andrus, and Vern Kelch of Idaho Falls. In 1978, the resort was sold to Jack Alpi, who later sold to Wendell Butcher of California, but in April of 1983 Alpi filed suit against Terra Vista, Inc., of Utah, alleging that it was a sham company.

Bear Gulch faced foreclosure by FmHA for the sum of \$33,000. In 1983, a group of Ashton citizens, under the chairmanship of Howard Bergman, tried to raise enough money to purchase the facility. FmHA rejected their bid of \$5,500. Tom Harward and Jim Harward purchased the resort for \$12,000. The resort was closed during the 1983–84 season. U.S. Forest Service terms were complied with until, in October 1985, Harwards were notified of items that had to be corrected before they would be allowed to operate the next year. The requirements were not met, and the area did not open for the 1985–86 season. In 1986, the Harwards were notified that, based on existing conditions and past performance, the Forest Service did not intend to issue a permit for the 1986–87 season. The Harwards were

given until July 1, 1988, to complete removal of improvements and complete site rehabilitation.

The resort sat idle until an evening late in October of 1989. Lou Woltering, ranger of the Ashton District, said he gave the order to burn the lodge. This was a surprise to most residents, for there had been no notice in the news media, nor had public input been solicited in making the decision. Woltering explained, “After making many calls to see if there was any interest in salvaging the building, it was not serving any purpose the way it was, and there had been numerous break-ins,” and “Bringing the old lodge up to current building and safety codes would be very costly.” Doug Muir, assistant district ranger, said every effort had been made to encourage Tom and Jim Harward to bring the operation up to safety standards, but it had not been done. The matter was in court more than once, with the decision finally in favor of the Forest Service. A few days later, bulldozers knocked down the stone fireplace and buried the rubble, leaving just a memory. The incident left many local residents bitter toward the Forest Service, and a local mistrust of Forest Service policy still exists.

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It was often said if you could ski Bear Gulch, you could ski anywhere in the world. Sun Valley was the first established ski resort in Idaho, in 1936, and Bear Gulch was the second.

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*Ski runs at Bear Gulch.*

### **Ambassador's Cup Sports Foundation**

Keith Nyborg served a mission for his church to Finland, later returning there to bring the lovely Raija home to Idaho to be his wife. Later, when the United States needed an Ambassador to Finland, the people of Ashton brought pressure to bear on their elected representatives, and President Ronald Reagan appointed Keith Ambassador to Finland, where he served for five years. When he returned to Ashton in 1986, he suggested to the Chamber of Commerce that the community sponsor a cross-country ski race similar to the 75 km Finlandia Ski Race he had participated in. Keith accepted the chairmanship of the committee, and along with Weldon Reynolds, Arnold Young, Bonnie Burlage, James Stoddard, David Krueger, and Joyce Otto, began plans for the first race, which they set for February 13, 1988. As time went on, some of the original members of the committee dropped out and were replaced by Ken Schauer, Nieca Jessen, and Don Black.

Within hours of the beginning of the first race, a blizzard hit the area, and the race had to be canceled. Snowmobiles and sno-cats were sent out to rescue the skiers, some of whom were safe at Floyd and Amy Grif-fel's Squirrel Store. Some made it to the Kurt Kandler home, broke a window for entry, and made a phone call to let race officials know where they were. A few made it to the maintenance station north of Lamont and were rescued by the county road crew. One skier, John Platt,

was found on the Reclamation Road. No lives were lost, although it was a very dangerous situation.

Under the auspices of the Ambassador's Cup Foundation, a mountain bike biathlon was held in the summer of 1989 starting at Hiway 20, just north of the bridge, running 36 miles east and back to Ashton. This event was later canceled because of lack of participation. In 1992, the race was held in conjunction with the American Dog Derby and was very successful. An offshoot of the above races was the beginning of the Mesa Falls Marathon, which has been very successful, with the assistance of Dave "Jake" Jacobson, but which was originated by Ambassador Nyborg.

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If you want to make her day, just say "Hi ya, Raija" to Mrs. Nyborg.

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### **American Dog Derby**

Dog teams were a familiar mode of transportation in early Ashton, so Jay Ball, Gus Isenburg, George Zarn, and others had the idea to hold the first Ashton Dog Derby for the North American Championship dog race. The first race was held March 4, 1917, from West Yellowstone, and was won from a field of five racers by Tud Kent in 26 hours through a blizzard, 65 miles



to Ashton. The following year's races were highly promoted by the Union Pacific Railroad, which ran special trains carrying hundreds of passengers from Salt Lake City. Whistlin' Lyd Hutchinson participated in the 1922, 1923, and 1924 races; in her fur-trimmed parka and velvet pants, she was an attractive national advertisement for the races. Whistlin' Lyd died in 1930 but was honored by having her picture on the Dog Derby button for 1931.

Tud Kent in his ten-gallon hat and four-buckle overshoes also won in 1919, 1921, 1922, 1925, and 1928. Bill Trude won in 1918; Smoky Gaston in 1923; George Zarn's son, Alcott, a teenager, in 1924; Warren Cordingley in 1926; and Earl Kimball in 1927 and 1930. The 1920 race was canceled because of lack of snow, as was the race in 2005. Other winners were Roy Stover in 1931, Warren Cordingley's son Don in 1932, in 1934 (in the only race run on wheels because of lack of snow), and in 1935. Ray Peterson won in 1933, and Lloyd VanSickle in 1936 and 1937. In 1938 and 1939, the winner was Celey Baum. Everett Heseman won in 1940, 1941, 1942, 1946, and 1947. The races were not held in 1944 and 1945 because of World War II. Lloyd VanSickle won in 1948, and Lowell Fields won the newly added freight race. The races were called off in 1949 because of too much snow, but in 1950 and 1951 they were won by Austin Seeley. In the last year of the derby, the winner was Ernest Harrigfeld.



*Togo Manning, as "the Old Trapper," was a fixture of the Dog Derby. He crafted many of the harnesses, rigging, and other leather goods used by the mushers.*



*Tud Kent, winner of the 1928 American Dog Derby, on the grandstand receiving prize money and a trophy.*



*Lydia Hutchenson, the 1924 Dog Derby queen, flanked by admirers and a brass band. This photo shows some of the polished showmanship that had taken over the American Dog Derby by this time, making it a world-class event.*

## *Recreation*

Over the years, several women have participated in the races, including Lottie Anderson and Monte Bauer in 1927; Veneta Calonge in 1928; Thula Geelan in 1930, 1934, and 1938; and Gene Trude in 1934.

During the several years of the Dog Derbies, there were dances in the Opera House and in the basement of the Ashton Hotel, along with wide-open gambling. The people of Ashton will never forget the excitement of “going to the dogs” at the American Dog Derby, along with other dog-sledding enthusiasts from all over the world.

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In 1948, Lewis Price parachuted with his dogs into a field just south of Ashton, but the sled landed on a horseshoe rabbit, and all the dogs took off after it, dragging their parachutes behind them.

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The VanSickle brothers had a pet bear in their team, but it had no patience with the dogs if they were slow and would speed them up with a swipe of its paw.

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## *Chapter 6*

### **EDUCATION**

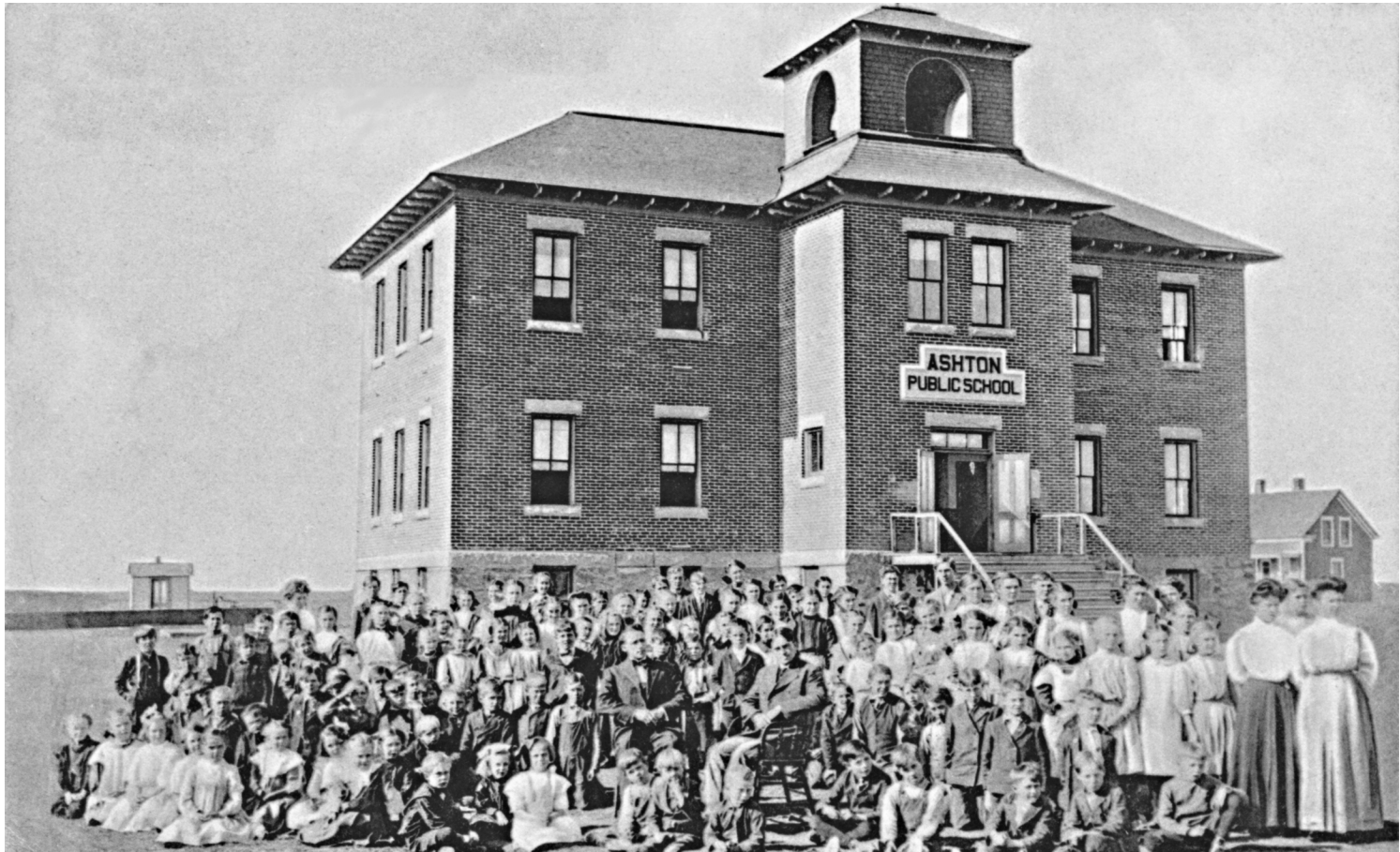
#### **Ashton Public Library**

In 1910, the Ashton Commercial Club and Free Reading Room was in an upstairs room above the Teton Pharmacy in the Masonic Building. In 1914, the Study Club took over its sponsorship. It was moved in 1916 to rooms above the Star Theater, where six months rent was \$15. It was later moved to the Ashton City Building in 1943. The first paid librarian was Henrietta Vansell, followed by Mrs. C. D. Baker, Mrs. Zelma Ball, Mrs. Florence Owen, Mrs. Lewis Kiser, and Mrs. R. L. Baker. Mrs. Florence VanDeusen and Mrs. Leo Hammond were also involved. One item of expense shown was curtains from the Cheap Cash Store for \$4.10. The club was later relocated just west of the C. W. & M. Building, and then

moved to the Ashton Community Center. Lorene Hoch became librarian in 1966, taking over from Nettie Baker, who retired in 1978. Diana Davis started the children's library, which was later taken over by Eileen Bergman Calonge.

#### **Ashton Schools**

When Idaho became a state in 1890, Miles R. Cahoon was appointed the first school superintendent of Fremont County; thereafter, it was an elective position, and Miss Gusta Fletcher was, in 1898, the first elected superintendent. In 1947, the state law was changed, and the local school boards thereafter appointed superintendents.



*The original Ashton Public School, shortly after its construction in 1906. The school was destroyed by fire about 1925.*

The first schools in the area were usually held in the home of the teacher or another settler. Schools were built about six miles apart so students would not have far to travel. In 1891, the first school was built about a mile north of the site of Ashton, and in 1895 a log schoolhouse was built at Lodi. Mr. Slatery taught at Lodi in the winter and Sarilda in the summer.

In February 1906, the school district of Harris petitioned to be consolidated with the Lodi district and build the Union School at Ashton. It was known as Ashton Common School District #47, with John Hill, Ernest Spratling, and Samuel Tatlow as trustees. This school was used until, coinciding with the beginning of Ashton in February 1906, a two-story brick building with a basement was built on the site of Ashton's present elementary school on First Street. The first janitor was named Victor. He was a cobbler and had a shoe shop near the horse barn provided for the students who rode horses to school. The first principal was C. F. Cowles.

In 1913, the district was reclassified as Independent School District #8. In 1915, a three-story high school was built just south of the elementary school. At that time there were 224 students enrolled in grades one through twelve. The first graduate was Gale Mercer in 1915, followed by Allie Anderson in 1916, and in 1917 Mary Beckstead and Rosebud Rogers. The first Junior Prom was held in 1918 in their honor. There were 18

seniors in the graduating class of 1924 under principal David L. McClun. He was followed in 1927 by R. R. Bell.

In 1924, Earl George "Kirk" Kerstetter was hired as custodian. He served in that position for 36 years. The football field at the old North Fremont High School site was named "Kirk's Field" in his honor.

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Notable accomplishments from Ashton's schools include beating Ricks College in football in 1927 and Bud Swanstrum's district-championship-winning football team in 1942 with Phil Smith as coach. Ted Taylor, Hal Harrigfeld, Tom Holcomb, and Darrell Murdoch were all on the State All-Start football team. Wes Christensen coached Jimmie Marshall as North Fremont's state wrestling champion. Hal Harrigfeld's basketball team's 1978 won over Teton to break their fantastic winning streak. Other high points include Wally Siwachok's state championship football team in 1989, Bob Christensen's winning wrestling team, and Betty May's state debate championships in 1990 and 1991.

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The elementary school burned down in 1928. The basketball team used the Opera House for practices and games until about 1932, when a two-story addition was built on the north side of the high school. Fred G. Brady was principal, becoming superintendent in 1935 and serving until 1943, then becoming a member of the school board. James V. Lacey was principal after Fred Brady, followed by Frank Dorfleur and Mr. Joyce W. Perry.

## Education

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In 1939, Kenneth Seeley, Bud Rogstead, Winston Taylor, and friends managed to herd some cows into the school. Lorin Pence and Doug Hoag had planned to help but decided to go to a movie instead. They tried to get one of the cows to the second floor, but she didn't want to go. Kirk did the cleanup with a garden hose, which then required sanding of the buckled floor. They each had to pay \$20 for the cleanup. Winston says, "That was a lot of money in those days, and all I did was hold the door open."

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The first yearbook, *The Yellowstone Eagle*, was published in 1924 and then yearly until 1930, when the name was changed to *The Derby*. There were several years in the 1930s when no yearbook was published. When Glade Lyon came to Ashton in 1938, as a sophomore, he was surprised to find that there had not been a yearbook for several years, so he pushed for one and became editor-in-chief of the 1941 yearbook, entitled *The Husky Howl*. The next yearbook in 1946 was called *The Royal A*, but since 1950 the name *The Musher* has been used.

Early-day transportation for school and other school functions was difficult. Mrs. Marion White Albrethsen recalls that the 1936 football team traveled to Driggs for their game in the back of a truck.

In 1947, there were 21 school districts in Fremont County. When the Idaho Legislature passed a law to consolidate districts, an election was held in February

1948, and Joint School District A-215 was formed. The vote was 1,099 to 351. That consolidation of the many school districts required the building of a new high school and agricultural shop on land furnished, under the leadership of mayor Bob Timmons, by the City of Ashton, north across Main Street from the existing high school. The trustees accepted the new school in August 1951, with Mark R. Anderson as principal and Don Haycock as junior-high and elementary principal. Glenn Anderson, class of 1933, remembers scooping the first shovel of dirt and hanging the last door of the project.

Some outlying schools and supplies were sold at public auction, with Preston Atchley buying the excess coal at the Svea Falls (Hugginsville) building for \$50, Oliver Baum paying \$40 for a single-hole outhouse, and the barn to Forrest Howell for \$370. Stanley Loosli bought the Farnum barn for \$610, and the Greentimber barn was purchased by Frank Stegelmeier for \$330.

Because of the need for additional elementary classrooms, construction of eleven classrooms, new restrooms, a multipurpose room, and a principal's office were added to the elementary building in 1965. The next building project was the addition of four classrooms, an auditorium, and a band room on the west side of the high school gymnasium in 1974 under Chuck Meyers, principal. The seventh and eighth grades were moved to these additions during the reign of Lyle Hossner, principal, who succeeded Julian Hibbert.





*Ashton High School, about 1930. The building appears to be several years old by the time this photo was taken, as there are obvious signs of weathering. An old hand pump to the right of the photo indicates that the photo was taken before the 1940s or 1950s. Further, the addition to the right (north) had not yet been constructed. This building became the elementary school, was later condemned in about 1968, and was finally demolished in 1974. It stood where the elementary school is today.*

## *Education*

The older portion of the elementary building was demolished and new classrooms added in March 1974. J. B. Alexander, Walt Svedin, Gordon Zollinger, Leonard Hull, Florence Adams, and Garth Miller were principals during this time. In 1979, while Delbert McFadden was principal, the new vocational building was completed. Other principals at the elementary level included Dr. Thompson, Terry Johnson, Gail Blanchard, Jack Boggetti, Grant Bishoff, and Gloria Winters. With John Pymm as principal, following Alvin "Dick" Seeley, a new bond levy passed, and construction of a new high school and junior high just east of town was finished in 2004 with David Risenmay as principal.

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Special commendation should be given to Bill Baxter, who has produced and directed a high school musical play every year, and to JoAnn Gifford Richards Anderson, who has spearheaded the operetta in the elementary school.

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June Misseldine, high school secretary for 21 years, should be remembered. She said she could train any new principal without a problem.

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## *Chapter 7*

### **NEIGHBORING AREAS AND COMMUNITIES**

#### **Sawmills**

Before Ashton even began, the Arangee Mill in Island Park, now covered by the Island Park Reservoir, supplied sawed lumber for the communities around what was to become Ashton. Logging was a major business, producing saw logs, power poles, posts, railroad ties, mine props, cellar timbers, corral poles, and pulpwood. John Van Sickle worked at a sawmill north of Ashton for Mr. Jackson in 1897.

The first sawmill, at the confluence of the Snake River and Warm River, was built by Milton M. Hammond and Joseph S. Hendricks in 1892. A millpond was built along side the new mill. A steam boiler powered the saw and planer. Little is known about the operation of the mill in the 1920s and '30s. By 1940, Randall Howe

had acquired it. About 1943, Herk Rightenour was buying the mill from Howe, but because of wartime conditions, sometimes the mill was allowed to run and sometimes not. Herk ran into financial trouble, and Howe foreclosed.

After World War II, Howe sold the mill to Chet Isaacs (just returned from the Navy) and his brother Porter. They called their enterprise Warm River Lumber Co. and ran it successfully until the mid 1960s. The mill was powered with the old water turbine system for many years. Chet and his wife, Selma, who taught piano lessons in Ashton, built a log home on what was called The Island. Logs were trucked in or skidded into the Snake River at Bear Gulch with oxen and captured at the mill with cables strung across the river.

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*



*The Isaacs' sawmill, about 1955.*

There were many small mills as remembered by Norman Bates, who first came to the area in 1953 and worked for the railroad ranch and then for Chet Isaacs. He remembers Stoddard Brothers on the Shotgun Valley Trail, Barney South and Art Fransen sawing house logs, and Gene Jones sawing railroad ties near Island Park siding. Wadsworth Brothers had a mill in St. Anthony, and Bryce Golding had a small mill that he moved from one location to another but often set up on Antelope Flat. In the early fifties, Gene Anderson and Ellis Stoker brought a mill from Squirrel Meadows to about a mile north of Ashton—A. & S. Sawmill. In 1957, LeBeck Bros. built a large mill just north of Ashton. Garland Call had a camp on Fish Creek where he cut and hand-peeled power poles. Other timber workers remembered by Norm are Fred Stephens, Lynn Stephens, Chet Phillips, Erwin Spitz, Don Gunter, George Kidder, Clair McCausey, and Dallas McCausey.

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Garry Isaacs, son of Chet Isaacs, tells of playing, when six years old, on the logs in the millpond and falling in the water and calling for help. He was rescued by a fisherman and his son, whose identities were not known to him for about 50 years. It was later discovered that the rescuers were Dave Grube and his son Rulon Grube.

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## **Warm River**

The first settlers in the Warm River area were Bimlick and Josephine Stone, who arrived from England in 1896.

The earliest roads to Island Park ran through the dugways in and out of the canyon and were difficult to maintain. An old stone bridge can be seen on the east as one drops into the canyon. A contract was let in 1920 to reconstruct the road going down into Warm River and constructing a new bridge at the bottom. Otto Lobnitz was the contractor.

The Oregon Short Line Railroad was built in 1907. Later, J. H. Russell was superintendent of construction of the Warm River Tunnel in 1909. The main purpose for the Warm River siding was a 60-foot steel turntable built in 1908 and used to turn around the additional locomotives that had to be added to the trains to push the load to the top of Rae's Pass in Island Park. Stock pens were built south of the turntable in 1911, and there was a passing track on the east side. In 1930, the railroad listed Warm River as having a stockyard with a capacity of nine head of livestock on the loading deck.

A pump house built in 1907 supplied water from the river. The standard 24-foot-diameter 50,000 gallon wooden water tank was built on a concrete foundation. By 1946, the locomotives were working out of Ashton, so this water tank was removed.

Early farm families on the north side of the river were George and Willis Hibbard, Eli Kirkham, G. S. Arnold, David Levi Stone, Marvin Jones, and later Lavar Cherry. Farmers on the south side of the canyon were David Taylor Howell, William Preston Howell, Lorin Walker, and Charles Oakland Walker. Others on the south side were Max Marotz, Otto Lenz, Harry Hudson, Owens, Sheppard, and Joe and Henry Reimann. Ralph and Nellie Stephens purchased their Fish Creek Ranch just above Warm River from Joseph Hollis Egbert in about 1918.

A post office in Warm River is listed from 1909 to 1924, though its location or postmaster is unknown.

In 1909, an LDS ward was created in Warm River with Samuel P. Egbert as bishop. In 1914, David Howell was released as bishop and George Hibbard appointed as presiding elder, as the ward was downgraded to a branch.

School in Warm River began in 1909, first in Lorin Walker's log barn and then in a rock building at the bottom of the dugway. There were two teachers and 45 students. After a fire in 1939, a cast-stone schoolhouse was built halfway up the dugway on the flat owned by Charles Walker. It had a basement and one large classroom on the ground floor. A bell hung in the belfry to summon the students.

In 1940, a new two-room frame schoolhouse was built at the top of the hill just north of the Dave Howell

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

residence on land purchased from Henry Reimann. School was held in the new schoolhouse until 1943, when Fremont County consolidated all the small school districts.

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School-board trustee Ralph Hossner, a large man, was helping install a swing set at the school when Reimann became quite animated about not having been paid for the previous year's summer fallowing of the soil where the schoolhouse sat. An argument ensued, and Ralph hit Henry on the head with a shovel, knocking him to the ground. Henry took the matter to court, and Ralph was convicted of battery. The school board paid the fine.

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### **Warm River Resort**

Any story of Warm River must include Fred Lewies. Not the typical sod-busting German or Mormon immigrant, he and his brother Jack were born in Estonia but later went to live with relatives in South Africa. As a teenager, he fought in the Boer War but was taken prisoner and sent to England. Being skilled, he joined a traveling show troupe as a fancy rope performer and trick-shot artist, performing before the crowned heads of Europe. He also became an accomplished photographer, which took him to Australia, Asia, and South America. In 1910 the troupe landed in North America.

Fred traveled west, first to Driggs, but soon to Rexburg, where he ran a photo studio and a small farm.

While living in Rexburg in 1920, he met and married Berta Keck, who had immigrated from Switzerland. After their marriage, Fred and Berta found that the Warm River canyon reminded them of their homeland, so Fred filed a homestead and developed the Warm River Inn and Rendezvous Dance Hall. Their first concession stand on the edge of Warm River offered cold drinks and food. Popcorn was sold, and what was not sold was thrown in the river, beginning the tradition of feeding the fish. The resort consisted of a cafe, store, bar, and rental cabins.

Fred incorporated Warm River as a village in June 1947. Berta served as the first mayor. The Rendezvous Dance Hall just downstream featured dances every Saturday night during the summer. The Ross Dunn Orchestra was the favorite band to play at Warm River. Dances were held until 1950. There was a fence where men could stand and watch the dancers if they didn't have a dollar for a ticket. A pillar covered with mirrors ran through the center of the dance hall. Every July 4th, Fred would entertain his guests with a fireworks display shot from the rim of the canyon, directly over the dance hall. Alcohol was not allowed inside the hall, but a brisk business was carried on in the parking lot. Jim Hoy, who ran a still in the Greentimber area, was one of the main suppliers of moonshine.



*The Rendezvous Dance Hall, about 1930.*

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

Fred was an active fur buyer for the Hudson Bay Company. In the 1920s, rabbit fur hats were very popular. Fred paid 34 cents for a snowshoe, and 25 cents for a jack rabbit. The carcasses were sold for a nickel a pound to make dog food. On a good day, a hunter could make \$25 to \$50, which was good money then.

For years, local men helped Fred put up ice from Robinson Creek. Blocks would be sawed and stored in sawdust to be used during the summer.

Fred and Berta's son Harry Lewies attended the University of Idaho, where he served as student-body president and was active in ROTC. In World War II, Harry served as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. 3rd Army in the Battle of the Bulge under General George S. Patton. He earned the Silver Star, Oak Leaf Cluster, and a Purple Heart.

After Harry returned home, he helped his parents run the resort and was one of four partners in Bear Gulch Ski Basin. He married Lillian Glover in 1951, and they made their home in St. Anthony living at Warm River during the summers. Harry pursued business interests in title insurance and realty, and he taught high school at South Fremont High School.

The main highway to Yellowstone was rerouted up the Ashton Hill as Highway 20 in 1957, bypassing the resort, resulting in a great decrease in business. The old Rendezvous Dance Hall that had stood vacant burned down in the mid 1960s. The store and cabins were leased to various parties during the '60s. Since Harry

did not wish to go back into the restaurant business, he demolished the cafe and bar building.

In the late 1960s, Harry remodeled the old Keppner home and built an addition to it, opening a supper club and bar called the Ranch House. The business was operated at different times by local restaurateurs, including Jill Lehmkuhl, Harry Housley, and Larry Hossner. In 1974, Harry approached the Orvis fly-fishing equipment company and opened the first Orvis-endorsed fishing lodge, catering to serious fly-fishing clientele. The resort was renamed Three Rivers Ranch, and expert guides were hired to teach the new trend in catch-and-release fly fishing.

## **Marysville**

The town of Marysville, Ashton's older sister, had its beginning in May 1889 when Horace Weaver, his half-brother Frank, and his cousin Gibson came through the upper Snake River valley. Later that summer another cousin, Mary Weaver Baker, and her husband, Joseph Baker, came and filed on a quarter section of land with a spring on it, now known as Baker Spring, about a mile north of present-day Ashton. They homesteaded there and used a wagon box for their bedroom and a lean-to as their kitchen until they could build their two-room log cabin. Joe's brothers hauled the logs from the Greentimber area. Thomas William Whittle settled nearby.





*Marysville, looking southeast, about 1915. The grain elevator on the right is alongside the railroad tracks to Driggs that were completed in 1912, so this photo is no earlier than that date. Much of the horizon on the right half of the photo appears to be aspens that are certainly not there today. It is said that a vast stand of aspens (perhaps one of the world's largest) once covered the area east of Ashton to the foot of the Teton Range.*

### *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

Ed McGavin and Asa Hendricks filed on two quarter sections to the south of Joseph Baker with two sections of school land adjoining them to the south. Parts of these sections later became part of Ashton in 1906.

Mary Baker was the first postmaster, but when Marysville was organized two miles to the east, she transferred the post office there. John L. Dorcheus and his wife, Mary, built the Lodi Post Office on his ranch at Dorcheus Springs about a mile north of Ashton.

In the 1890s, other families began to arrive, and Bishop James Henry Wilson and David Weatherbee each deeded 80 acres to the Marysville town site to entice immigrants to settle there. The community was known as Springville when Idaho achieved statehood in 1890, but the postal authorities said there were too many communities with that name, and since there were five ladies named Mary living there, one of which was Postmaster Mary Baker, they chose the name of Marysville. When the post office was moved to Ashton, Marysville became Rural Route #2.

The first house was built by Tom Gooch, who was a notary public. Annie Gooch, his wife, became the postmaster following Mary Baker. Barbara Hardy taught children in her home, a tuition school, in 1890, until a one-room log schoolhouse could be built. The brick schoolhouse in Marysville was built in 1913.

The Marysville LDS church was organized in November 1891. The first church building was finished in 1892,

with James Henry Wilson installed as presiding elder in May 1893. The first meetinghouse was built of logs in 1893 and replaced by another in 1899. The Marysville Branch was officially organized in March 1902 with Hyrum Larson as presiding elder. It was made the Marysville Ward on June 28, 1903, with Parley Cutler as bishop.

The first mail was delivered by Morris Sprague using a dog sled that first winter. George White Sr. carried the mail from Chester up the old Fall River road to Farnum, Lillian, and Squirrel before the Oregon Short Line sired Drummond. In the spring of 1889, Mary Baker snowshoed from her home at Baker Springs to act as midwife at the birth of twins, Mary and Marian Whittle. There were no doctors north of Rexburg until 1902.

M. M. Hammond and Joseph Smith Hendricks built the first sawmill in the Ashton area in 1892 at the confluence of Warm River and the Snake River. Fred Hoffman and Will Cordingley operated the first well-drilling outfit. The Brady Canal, named for Governor Brady, who helped greatly in the settling of Marysville, was changed to the Marysville Canal and Irrigation Co. in 1904, when Brady sold his interest in it. Along with the Farmer's Own Ditch Co., it is still serving the community.

Dr. Young opened his drug store in 1902. The official date of incorporation of Marysville was January 15, 1904, on a petition signed by R. W. Hardy and

others. At that time there were about 30 business buildings, including Home Banker, Tithing Office, Town Well, Reynolds Hotel, Post Office, Lime Harris Blacksmith Shop, Kelly's Hotel (Mrs. J. Kelley, prop.), Oscar Green Saloon, Blacksmith Shop, Barber Shop, Kelly's Livery Barn, Louis Shaw Blacksmith Shop, Relief Society Grainery, City Jail, McNair's Blacksmith Shop, Hendricks Livery Barn, Reynolds Butcher Shop, Ed Shettler's Bank, Hessman Lumber Co., William Barrett Mercantile, Farmer's Equity, Frank Britton Store, Cash Racket Jim and Bill Leeper's Store, Brig Nelson Saloon, Clyde Lucas #2 Residence Store, Frank Britton Implementation, William Winigar Butcher Shop, and Mrs. Richard Brower's Millinery Shop. John Hendricks opened a loan agency in Marysville in November 1904. By July 1906, there were also C. E. Lucas's general merchandise store; William Hobson, farrier; and Sam Nelson Buffet. In May 1906, Baker's Livery started a stage line from Ashton to Marysville. Otto Johnson ran a dray wagon from the railway station delivering freight to all the stores. Mat Fuller was the Marysville depot agent. J. H. Egbert resigned as marshal of Marysville, and S. C. Drollinger took his place, in May 1905.

An early photo shows a marching band ready for the July 4, 1905, parade. The musicians included Diamond Loosli and Milt Humphries, with Theo. France as Uncle Sam. The largest population of Marysville was in 1904–1905 with approximately 101 families. There

was always plenty of entertainment, with Saturday being a day for horse races, baseball games, and dances at Sheppard Hall in the evening.

Work on the bridge at Wilson ford, to be known as the Marysville Bridge, was begun by Grant Hopkins in January 1905 with rock rip-rap. It was finished in concrete in July 1906. It was built in three sections, but in 1947 one section caved in and was carried away by the spring run-off. Dennis and Paul Gifford were there shortly after it was demolished. In 1905, it was the main road to West Yellowstone by way of Hatchery Ford and the Osborne Bridge.

It was originally planned for the town of Marysville, 1.7 miles to the east of Ashton, to be the railroad center, but it is reported that the farmers in Marysville asked too much money for their land, and that there was a dispute with the Marysville bishop concerning the route of the lines through his land. In December 1905, officials of the Oregon Short Line Railroad came from Salt Lake City, visited the area, and settled on the townsite of Ashton for the location of the depot and the yards.

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A poem written by Abner Widdison shortly after Ashton became a town, and widely circulated at the time, said:

Marysville was Marysville  
When Ashton was a pup,  
But Ashton will be Ashton  
When Marysville's gobbled up.

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

There was a tremendous rivalry between the two towns, so Marysville's version was:

Marysville's an old dog;  
Ashton's just a pup.  
Marysville will be an old town  
When Ashton's gobbled up.

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On March 18, 1904, Marysville trustees passed a law closing saloons on Sunday and compelling drug stores to require a written excuse to sell wine and whiskey on Sunday.

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An ad in the November 1905 *Marysville Mirror* read, "Property is going up, now is the time to buy." The newspaper was bought out in 1906, and its equipment moved to Ashton.

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The Chester ball team came to Marysville April 20, 1905, but was easy prey for the Invincibles. The free dance was paid for by the Chesterites. The Lodi team came up that Saturday, but a good game failed to materialize.

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The Nedrows, who were Methodists, helped get the post office in Marysville, because, under Idaho law, Mormons were not considered citizens and could not sign an application.

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## **Drummond**

Elmo Lamont homesteaded the land that, except for the grant from Conrad Lenz, became the village of Drummond. The town was to have been named Lamont for the Lamont family who first settled there, but Drummond, the railroad engineer who surveyed the line there, decided to name it after himself and call the next town Lamont. Mrs. Margaret Painter was the first citizen of Drummond. The 1900 census showed 15 residents.

The first post office was established in October 1911, with Mary Conlin as postmaster. The first mail carrier was Phoebe Saunders White Swanner. She made a loop three times a week from Ashton to Drummond and on to deliver mail to Squirrel, where Charlie Burrell owned the store and post office, and on to Fall River, where Silas Green owned the Farnum Store and post office. She was succeeded by Hazen Hawkes, who carried the mail for 18 years, except for an interim 8 years when it was delivered by Conrad Lenz.

The Foster Lumber Co. was located there in 1913, with James "Monte" Painter working there. He was also the first janitor of the school and was mayor for several years until 1947.

The settlement was incorporated as the Village of Drummond in January 1917, with L. A. Lamont, C. N. Dedman, H. L. Benson, F. K. Wallin, V. E. Bailey, and R. J. Little as trustees. This led to the ultimate demise

of the other small communities in the area. The date on the three-story schoolhouse was 1913. Some years the enrollment exceeded 200. Among the early teachers were Mr. Catrin, Mr. Cowles, Mr. Caulderhead, Mrs. Pete Madsen, Alice Hannawalt Simmerley, Freida Isenberg, and Mrs. Steve Meikle. The school at Green Hill, five miles to the south, and Lillian, a few miles to the west, were later incorporated into the Drummond district.

The first business license was issued in October 1917 to V. E. Bailey for a general merchandise store, the second to the St. Anthony Flour Mill, and the third to the Spalsbury Implement Company. Other licenses issued in 1918 were to Burrall & Co., Sperry Grain Co., L. O. Anderson, Miller Bros., E. S. Judd, National Park Lumber Co., and a pool hall. In 1956, L. B. Lindsley advertised paint for sale in Drummond. In 1921, Monte worked in the Sperry Division of General Mills as elevator manager at Drummond.

A bond election in 1917 authorized the drilling of a well and installation of a water system. In 1919, another successful bond election, held at the Presbyterian Church, authorized the enlargement of the water system. The ladies of Drummond organized a "Ladies Aid."

### **Green Hill**

Green Hill was a small community about two miles south of Drummond and had its own school, located near the Teton River, for several years. The building was also used as a community center and a church. In 1910, Joseph Young was the teacher. The school district consolidated with Drummond in 1913.

The residents of Green Hill built the first telephone system in the entire Ashton area. Known as "the Farmer's Line," it was extended into Lillian about 1912 and connected to the line from Ashton in 1915.

### **Sheetz**

The Sheetz school was located on the reclamation road. The D. H. Kelly family was instrumental in having the one-room school building built there. Mrs. Duke was the first teacher there, in 1920.

### **Farnum**

The settlement of Farnum was named for Rosamond Farnum Sprague Green, the mother of Silas Green, the first postmaster, who settled just downstream from the confluence of Conant Creek and Fall River. This was also the location of the Farnum store and post office built in 1897.

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*



*Katie Murdoch on the family farm in Farnum, about 1930, looking embarrassed because her brothers have dressed her in boys' clothes.*

The Farnum Branch of the LDS church was organized in 1897, with James Green as presiding elder. Residents went to Marysville to church when possible by fording the river at what is now Anderson's Bridge. A small log school building was erected in 1899. Church was held there until a church house was built in 1909.

The Farnum school district was formed in 1900. The first teacher in Farnum was Mae Hawkes. A new rock school was built in 1909. In 1911, another room was added by Hugh Davis, and two teachers were hired.

### **Grainville**

Grainville, the location of some grain elevators on the railroad a few miles west of Squirrel, was named for the acres of prolific grain in the area. There was a one-room school house where Kate Thomas Lamont taught. Art Anderson's father settled in the area around 1910, and Art's Aspen Acres Golf Course was ultimately built nearby.

### **Greentimber**

Greentimber, a small community eight miles east of Ashton, was first known as Green Timber because of the lush grasses and quaking aspens in the area. It includes the area north of Fall River, south of Robinson Creek, east of the Hugginsville district, and west

of the Targhee National Forest. Ferdinand Kramer, the first settler, arrived in October 1896 and built a cabin near the confluence of Porcupine and Rock Creeks. He left for two years but returned in 1898 with his father, Henry. In 1899, Fred Kramer and Henry Oastman filed on water from Fall River for the Greentimber Canal, but in 1901 they transferred it to the Yellowstone Canal Co.

School was held in 1903 and 1904 in the Reimann home with Pearl Fisher as the teacher, as were Lutheran Church services with Carl Lindsley as minister. The school district was organized in 1905. The schoolhouse was built in 1906 with lumber hauled from the ranger station by soldiers, and school started in 1907. The schoolhouse still stands, owned by Fremont County School District, but the ground it sits on is owned by Marilyn Corcilus. The 300-pound bell that was originally installed on the schoolhouse was stolen in 1970 but returned three years later, only to be stolen again in 2004 and never recovered.

The first postmaster was Fred Hossner, in his home, with mail delivered from Ashton. The first road grader, pulled by eight head of horses, went up the Greentimber road in 1903 as far as the site of the schoolhouse. The state of Idaho took over maintenance and construction of the road to Cave Falls in 1933. The first telephone line was constructed in 1909, and the first electricity came in 1938.

In June 1935, Lucille Grube, Evelyn Grube, Neola

Vik, Madison Reimann, Elsie Howell, Florence Hall, and Goldie Zitting started the Greentimber Goodfellowship Club, meeting in their homes until 1937, when they began meeting in the schoolhouse once a month, inviting their husbands to come and play pinochle. The men later started the Greentimber Garden Club, which was a cover for their poker games.

Many new homes have been built in the area during the past few years by people who say, "We're here because we love the scenery and love the isolation in this beautiful country."

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Early in Greentimber's history, one abused woman reported that her husband had committed suicide. The fact that the wound was obviously in his back seemed to go unnoticed, and an official investigation was never held.

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In 1936, Alvin Matthews visited his old friend, Jim Hoy, a bootlegger, who lived in a remote cabin on Porcupine Creek, to buy some moonshine, but he was refused because he supposedly owed for previous drinks. Matthews had his rifle and promptly shot Hoy, then spent the night "dead drunk" in the cabin. The next day he was arrested and confined to the jail in St. Anthony, but after a few days he committed suicide by jumping off the upper bunk onto his head after telling a fellow inmate, "I know I'm guilty, and I don't want my grandchildren to go through my trial." Both men are buried in Pineview Cemetery.

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

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It took early settlers Henry Kramer and his son Ferdinand a full week using a block and tackle to get their wagon over the Teton Pass.

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If you haven't played Greentimber Stud, you just haven't played real poker.

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### **Hugginsville**

Svea Falls held their first school with about eight children in the summer of 1906 in the Dan Kirkham home. This school was later called Hugginsville because of the John Huggins family, who homesteaded just south and west of the corner in 1898, and the area has generally been known as Hugginsville ever since. Maude Hillman was the first teacher. In the fall of 1906, a log schoolhouse was built and later sided with lumber. About 1912 it burned, and a new one-room frame school was built. It had a cloakroom, was heated by a wood stove, and was used as a community center as well. A dance was held every Friday night. The school was closed in 1945 and consolidated with the other districts in 1948.

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Mrs. Ethel Huggins Reed said the first telephone line came in

1910. Her family boarded the linemen but couldn't afford a telephone. They didn't have indoor plumbing or electricity, but they did have a big raspberry and gooseberry patch.

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### **Franz**

Franz was and still is a railroad siding for the loading and shipping of grain. It was named for the first homesteaders, Bob and Max Franz. When World War I started, the name of Franz had a bad German connotation, so the name was changed to France.

There was a one-room schoolhouse with a teacher who lived in a nearby teacherage. The story is told that once when she went to the outhouse, a bobcat tried to get in with her. She was terrified and stayed inside until a student came along and told her the bobcat was gone.

Horseshoe Flats, a settlement south of Franz, was first homesteaded by O. L. Packer. Work on the Conant Creek Canal was started there in 1896. It was reported that there were herds of elk, deer, and antelope there at that time.

### **Lillian**

The settlement of Lillian was located between Far-num and Drummond. This small town was named for Lillian Newby, who served as the first postmaster. The



town had a post office, a store, and a school with as many as 35 students.

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The morning after one Halloween, Henry Bratt's buggy was found on top of the Lillian schoolhouse. It took three days to dismantle the buggy and lower it to the ground while the volunteers wondered how the perpetrators got it up there in one night.

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### **Lodi**

John L. Dorcheus, Ed Dorcheus' father, at Dorcheus Springs, established Lodi in 1893, about a mile north and a quarter-mile west of what would become the townsite of Ashton, when he bought the Shepard homestead. A four-room school and a post office were built, with Mary Dorcheus, Ed's daughter, as postmaster. Mail was delivered from Market Lake to St. Anthony in 1906 and then on to Lodi. Mr. Shepard taught at Lodi in the winter and Sarilda in the summer. In February 1906, the school district of Harris petitioned to be consolidated with the nearby Lodi district and build the Union School at Ashton.

### **Ora**

Symington Allen Nedrow and his wife, Sarah, came in 1890, the first to settle in that area. He filed on the water rights of all the springs in Snow Creek in 1892. Marion Joseph Kerr was the first postmaster, with the post office in his home. Ora was named after Mrs. Kerr.

George Kent had the contract to carry mail from St. Anthony to Ora and on to Rice, now known as Upper Sand Creek. The community of Rice, five miles west of Ora, was settled earlier because of the lush meadows. Summer school was held for three months every summer at Sarilda. The first schoolhouse was built in 1894 just southwest of the Ora Cemetery, but the two-room schoolhouse on the Kerr place was not built until 1905. In April 1905, the pupils celebrated Arbor Day by planting trees, shrubs, and flowers. Fred Hunnlent took over the school in 1908.

The Ora community was settled by early pioneers of the area and consisted of several homes along the main street. It later boasted a two-room schoolhouse, an LDS church built in 1892 (with Hyrum Wilson as presiding elder), and the church tithing granary, cellar, and platform scale, which were used for weighing produce for both church and public service. Marion Joseph Kerr was one of the early homesteaders and developers of the community. Under his leadership, the Ora church house was completed and dedicated in 1906 on a lot across the road from his home in Ora.

### *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

The Ora schoolhouse and the Kerr home and barn were later destroyed by fire, but the Ora church was still standing in the late 1980s. The year “1906” was posted on the front gable. At that time there were nineteen active member families, with a membership roll of 133 students.

The Arcadia LDS branch was organized in 1895 near Ora. Marion Joseph Kerr was presiding elder. The Ora Ward was located west of the river, four and a half miles straight west of Ashton. Fred C. Porter was clerk of the Arcadia Canal Co.

#### **Sarilda**

In 1888, Samuel Suver Sadoris and his wife, Sarilda, established their family near the sand dunes on Spring Creek and established an irrigation system there. His grandson, Sam Moon, was a longtime resident there with his extended family. When the application for a name for the community was sent to the postal department, one of the signers was Sarilda Sadoris, and although Sadoris was requested for the name of the community, it was assigned—probably through a clerk’s error—the name of Sarilda.

The first school in the Ora Sarilda area was held in the Sadoris’ living room, taught by Lena Moon. Irene Stone deStwolinski taught school at Sarilda in 1906.

The main freighting road and the main route to West Yellowstone at that time was the Sadoris Hill Road. To

the east was the Ora Hill Road, a parallel route that was also used. The two roads met north of Big Bend Ridge near Elk Wallow Well. Since there was no bridge across the Snake River at that time, the Hill Ford, which is now under the backwaters of the Ashton Reservoir, was used to go from Ora and Sarilda to the Ashton area.

Tom McMinn was a neighbor who helped survey the canals and build the dams on Spring Creek and the dams to make fish ponds. Sadoris wanted people to stop at his place and change horses. He raised a large garden and sold the produce at West Yellowstone.

The Ora area was originally used as a cattle-holding ground by cattlemen from southern Idaho. There was a line camp at the foot of Big Bend Ridge between the dunes and the river where it was easy to sort, mark, and divide the cattle in the spring and fall.

#### **Vernon**

The first settler in the Vernon area was Symington A. Nedrow (in 1892), whose children were Salome, Jim, Dick, Al, George, Paul, Etta, Lucy, Lulu, and Ruby. He settled on the north side of the river, but Vernon was actually on the south side. He brought scrapers and 30 head of mules and worked on the water works of Eagle Rock.

Millie Ricks Olsen, who was married in Marysville to John P. Olsen on April 3, 1893, lived in Vernon and worked for Dave Nelson, who had a dairy at Black

Springs. Nelson Dairy furnished employment for many people.

Early residents took wagons into the Bechler Meadows, cut the wild hay, and hauled it back to Vernon. The Nedrows maintained a commercial campground.

Sarah Nedrow helped organize the first church in the area with regular services being held. A Methodist church building, begun in 1892 with planed lumber hauled by team and wagon from the Arangee Mill in Island Park, was finished in 1898. This church building later became the Vernon Schoolhouse and had 30 students. Before that, the Vernon school was just east of the church. The Vernon schoolhouse, a brick building, was built in 1900 by Perham and Harris. They sometimes had their own minister but sometimes shared a minister with the Ashton Methodist Church. The first minister in the new church was Harley J. Adams, who rode a horse from St. Anthony to teach. One inexperienced minister on an inexperienced horse attempted to cross the river in the wrong place and was drowned.

There was a cemetery in Vernon, but most of the headstones were later bulldozed up against the fence, and the ground was then plowed over.

Three different years there were cricket infestations, and everyone turned out to keep them from crossing the new Fritz Bridge, now named the Vernon Bridge. It was difficult, but they were successful.

The Ashton Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter-day Saints was organized in March 1902, with Hyrum Larson as presiding elder. It was made the Vernon Ward on June 28, 1903, with Parley Cutler as bishop. In the autumn of 1903, the brethren got out logs, had them sawed, and erected a log and frame building about one and a half miles south and one mile west of the Ashton town site for the Vernon Ward chapel. While that building was under construction, all church services were held in the home of Brother Abraham Davis. In the winter of 1904, Bishop Cutler died and was replaced by Samuel Parley Egbert, who served until 1907, when the Vernon Ward was combined with the Ashton Ward and the old Vernon church building was moved into Ashton, placed on church property, and used as an amusement hall.

### **Sand Dunes**

The border of the tillable land west of Ashton is marked by the Sand Dunes west of Sarilda. The sand dunes, shifting, restless, never still, are haunted by winds that moan strangely at times. Long ago, when the Bannocks were a powerful tribe, the Blackfeet warred upon them, and Indian legend says these wars led to the creation of the sand dunes. There were many battles, and so bloody were they that the legends say the spirits that watched over the Indians tired of the senseless slaughter. A warning came—how or when the Indian doesn't know—but the Bannocks and their allies

### *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

obeyed the spirits. They gave up the land of the buffalo, the rich valleys, the clear sparkling streams where the fish leaped. But their women no longer keened in mourning nor chopped off one finger joint after another as their men fell never to rise. The children did not go fatherless.

But this retreat did not satisfy the Blackfoot. Perhaps the message from the spirits never reached them—or perhaps they knew only the evil spirits the mountain men claimed they personified. At any rate, they took the retreat of the Bannocks from their excellent hunting grounds as a sign of weakness and pursued them more viciously than ever. Away from the buffalo, beyond the best of the game, out of the last of the pleasant valleys and meadows, the Blackfoot pushed the Bannocks clear to the edge of the desert. Like others before and since, the Blackfoot took appeasement as a sign of weakness.

And then—the Bannocks stopped retreating. They could take no more and retain any shred of dignity. Good spirits—evil spirits—come what may, the Blackfoot had pushed them too far. Fiercely, they turned on their enemy. It was a battle to have delighted a Roland or a Prince Valiant. And there was no doubt who was winning. The anger of the righteous seems to give a gun or a tomahawk extra power. The spirits—good? evil? No one knows. And the Indian never says.

But the spirits were outraged. The winds came

whistling down upon the embattled warriors. The squaws and the children and the old men staggered away from the dunes that began building up. Louder, stronger came the winds, with the shrieking of the spirits in them. And the dunes swallowed up the warriors, good and bad, Bannock and Blackfoot, foe or friend, and never were any of them seen again.

The tribes went rapidly downhill after that. The Blackfoot that were left were decimated by a smallpox epidemic, and their power was forever broken. The Bannocks wandered the dismal plains of the Snake River, poor in lodges and clothing, often without buffalo, sometimes eating grasshoppers and crickets to survive. And out in the sand dunes one can find arrowheads and occasionally a bone or two in the shifting sands. But no Indians. To this day they haven't forgotten what happened there.

### **Squirrel**

Squirrel, named for the flourishing ground squirrels in the area, was created in 1900 but was first called Highland Ranch, with 2,160 acres, started by four young men for a stock and grain operation. They found grass higher than the sagebrush and aspen groves as beautiful as a painting, but it was a real task to make the fertile ground available to plant crops. The only one of the four to stay was ranch manager William Campbell,

who was the first postmaster and was succeeded by Felix Burgess in 1909.

By 1905, the ranch had grown to 4,000 acres, with four hundred head of Hereford cattle and hundreds of Red Duroc hogs. The Orme Brothers bought it in 1910 for \$80,000. However, the first settler of the area was probably Elijah "Boat" Johnson and his wife Anna, who took up a ranch in Squirrel Meadows in 1897. A canal was begun at least as early as 1899 but not finished until 1905.

The first store was built by Bill Wanke, but in 1903 the merchandise was moved to the new building built by Howard Campbell, who later sold to Felix Burgess. The post office was in that same building, and the mail was carried for four years by Mrs. Phoebe Saunders White Swanner from St. Anthony to Farnum, Lillian, and on to Squirrel. The route was taken over by Hazen Hawkes, who delivered for eighteen years except for an eight-year interim break, when the mail was delivered by Conrad Lenz.

Charles Burrall bought the store in 1909 and then sold to Axel Johnson, who ran the store and was postmaster for more than thirty years. Ax almost always had a pinochle game going in the back and had the first radio for everyone to listen to. He sold to Floyd and Aimee Griffel in 1950. The post office was closed in 1979, but the store was kept open for several years. It

was a polling place for the Squirrel Voting Precinct until 2000.

The Highland School was erected in the dry-farm area with two outhouses. One teacher handled all eight grades and lived in a cottage nearby. Hazel Scott taught in 1920. The first school at Squirrel was a log building constructed by Jens Morton "Mort" Anderson. It was replaced by a two-room building in 1916 and closed in 1950. In 1904, there were 54 students. Bad weather in winter made it so difficult to hold school that the school year was from April to November, with a four-month winter vacation.

Lutheran church services were first held in 1901, and a Lutheran church was built in 1907. LDS services were first held in the Highland school.

Carl C. "Kelsey" Lenz donated land two miles north of Squirrel Corners on the Reclamation Road in 1906 for a cemetery. It was first called the Zion Lutheran Cemetery but is now known as the Squirrel Cemetery. It is fenced, has a well and sprinkling system, and is still well kept.

Local men built the Squirrel Hall in 1917. It had a light plant, two stoves to keep it warm, and has always been a community center with dances, pinochle parties, and family gatherings. It was renovated in 1969 with insulation, a new tin roof and siding, and window coverings. Squirrel had a baseball team, a band, a Grange, and a Ladies Friendship Club.

## *Neighboring Areas and Communities*

The Kunrath family homesteaded near the forest on the location that is now Squirrel Creek Resort.

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Arthur Conant homesteaded in 1908. While he was hauling firewood, his load tipped over and pinned him underneath. He was unable to free himself and froze to death in the creek that now bears his name.

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About 1960, Schlitz Brewing Co. brought their crew and filmed a commercial on the front porch of the vacant Harrigfeld home across the street south of Aspen Acres Golf Course. Hal Harrigfeld, who was a major producer of malting barley, sat on the porch and passed a Schlitz beer to someone else. He was assisted by Herman Marotz, Kurt Kandler, Glen Atchley, and David Reinke. The locals helping were unhappy because the Schlitz people then poured the beer on the ground instead of letting them drink it.

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## *Chapter 8*

### **DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS**

There have been many famous and notable people who have called Ashton their home. This is to honor them. They're listed in no particular order, but some of the earlier residents are listed first. We have undoubtedly omitted some who should be listed here, and to them, we sincerely apologize.

**Charles C. Moore**, born in 1866, was one of the founders of Ashton, was a schoolteacher, was elected to the State Legislature in 1903 and 1905, was elected lieutenant governor for two terms, and was governor of Idaho from 1922 until 1927. He served for four years as President Hoover's appointee as commissioner of the General Land Office in Washington, D.C. He died in 1954.

**Hiram G. "Fess" Fuller**, one of the founders of Ash-

ton, was a schoolteacher, a state senator in 1915, the mayor of Ashton for several years, and held many other prominent positions until his death in 1954. In those days, if you were a lawyer you were called Judge; if you'd ever been in the army, you were Cap'n or Major; and if you were a schoolteacher you were called Professor. In the case of Professor H. G. Fuller, it was shortened to "Fess."

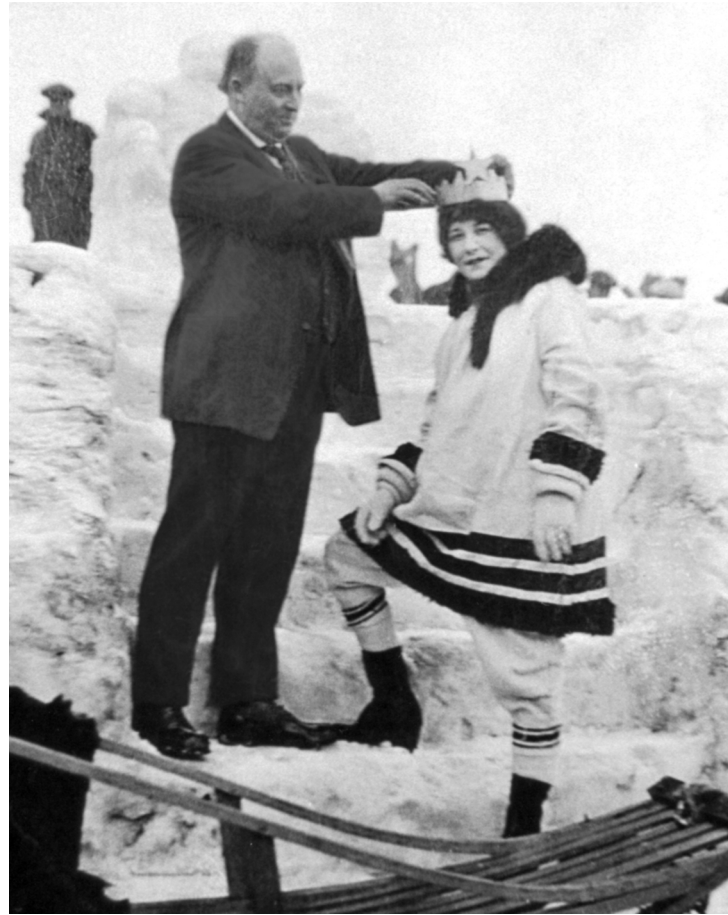
**James H. Brady** was instrumental in starting the Brady Canal, which later became the Marysvale (Marysville) Canal and Improvement Co., Ltd. He was elected governor of Idaho in 1908.

**Oliver P. "Bronc" Sparkman**, born in 1866, descendant from the Cherokee Indian Nation, was an early law officer in Ashton, a real cowboy wearhing a high-

### *Distinguished Citizens*

crowned western hat and carrying a six-shooter on his hip as he rode his horse down Main Street. Bronc was marshall of Ashton in 1909. He was such a recognizable figure that he was asked by FOX Film Company in 1930 to go to Hollywood to make a movie portraying a western sheriff. They referred to him as “our movie sheriff.” Whether or not Bronc actually made the movie is questionable. He found Hollywood “too glamorous” and returned to Ashton. He was Fremont County Sheriff from 1921 until 1926. He was elected constable of Ashton in November 1930 but was probably Ashton’s marshall in 1927. He died in 1936.

**S. “Sam” Trude** was an eminent Chicago lawyer who became a Fremont County justice of the peace. The story is told that when the game warden brought two fishermen who had exceeded their limits before Judge Trude, he fined them each \$25. A month or so later, the same two were brought in again, and the judge fined them \$50 each and cautioned them that they must quit poaching. Another month or so later, they were back, asking the judge how much it was that time, and that they had it right in their wallets. The judge responded, “You mean to tell me that you have 30 days in there?”



*Mayor H. G. Fuller crowning the Dog Derby Queen in 1925.*



**William Otis “Ott” Harris**, a veteran of World War I, was a prominent businessman and community leader, owner of the famous “Ott’s Place,” and was mayor of Ashton for two terms.

**Tud Kent** was a multi-year winner of the Ashton American Dog Derby, placing first in six events. He was the winner in 1917, 1919, 1921, 1922, 1925, and 1928. He was the original lessee of what would become Pond’s Lodge in Island Park in 1925. At one time, he operated a hamburger joint in Ashton.

**Dimond “Dime” Loosli** served as state representative in 1931 and state senator in 1923.

**Dick Vasac**, longtime citizen and philanthropist of Ashton, was born Richard Waschak March 29, 1900, in Vienna, Austria. He was trained as a restaurateur and, after losing his father in 1915 and his mother in 1917, he immigrated to the United States in 1920. In 1921, he answered an ad and moved to Squirrel to work for Harrigfelds. He never married but worked hard and acquired his own farm. At the time of his death on February 1, 1986, he left a sizeable trust fund to be distributed over the years as needed by the citizens of Ashton.

**Dr. Ed Hargis**, just out of medical school in the east in 1906, was on his way to the west coast when he stopped in St. Anthony, and it was suggested that he take “a brief visit to the new town of Ashton,” as he put it. He became Ashton’s first doctor and stayed for many years. At one time his office was in the Odd Fellows

building. His shingle read “Dr. E. L. Hargis, Physician; The Ashton Sanitarium, Dr. E. L. Hargis, Prop.”

**Calvin Harmon Smith** was born April 13, 1912, in Marysville, Idaho. His first professional fight was in 1931 at the American Dog Derby, and he went on to win the professional heavyweight championship of the Intermountain States in 1939, holding that position for many years through about 160 fights. He also served as Fremont County sheriff. He was once featured in the magazine *True Detective*.

**Dr. A. A. Krueger** was the best-known doctor of Ashton, beloved by all, and was instrumental in building the Ashton Memorial Hospital.

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An idea of how Dr. Krueger was able to keep the hospital in operation is the account of an occasion after his death but before the clinic was built, when an elderly lady came into the hospital and asked that she be admitted “because Dr. Krueger always puts me in the hospital for two weeks when I get back from Arizona.”

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Born July 15, 1912, a citizen of Latvia (one of the Balkan States) and educated in Italy, Dr. Krueger first arrived in Ashton with his wife, Margaret, December 1, 1940. They rented living quarters and office space in the Neifert Hotel, and he opened his practice there the next day. He became a citizen of the United States on August 27, 1942. He later used his home on the corner

## *Distinguished Citizens*

of Fremont and Eight Streets as an office until Bob Bean purchased that building, removed the top floor, and remodeled the rest into a funeral home.

Dr. Krueger enlisted in the army during World War II and was stationed in Europe. After he returned from the service, he bought the Merrill home on the corner of Eighth Idaho Streets and for a few months saw patients there. He remodeled a building on Main Street and began seeing patients there.

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Dr. Krueger made house calls.

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In 1948, the community rallied behind Dr. Krueger to raise money for a hospital building. Ashton Memorial Hospital was created as a nonprofit corporation. Fund raising and grants were responsible for paying for the building. The hospital opened with 10 acute-care beds and an emergency room and operating room. The first patient was admitted on April 10, 1950. In 1956, a pediatric ward was added, increasing the acute care beds to 20. In 1974, the final addition was a surgical suite that was required to meet state and federal requirements.

Dr. Krueger was a pilot and tragically crashed his plane in a "white-out" snow storm on January 26, 1976. After Dr. Krueger's death, the hospital struggled financially.

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Dr. Krueger drove a little red sports car and often failed to follow all the driving rules. Whether he was rushing to an emergency or simply driving home, the police turned a blind eye to his creative driving.

---

**Dr. Dan Hess**, along with his wife, **Dr. Mary**, started the Hess Heritage Museum in 1982, a mile south of Ashton on the farm where Dan was raised, to preserve their pioneer heritage, the early history of the Upper Snake River Valley, and the memory of all of those pioneers who played a major role in settling this part of the country. Dan was a radarman petty officer first class in the Navy from 1944 until 1947, and he served as a major in the army as a chaplain from 1957 until his recent retirement.

**Colonel Don Ghormley** enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943 and then transferred to the Army Engineers. He served in Germany, came home and enlisted in the National Guard, and later served in Korea and Viet Nam. He was one of Ashton's most decorated veterans. He started blacksmithing with his uncle when he was twelve and continued throughout his life. When asked if he could fix something, his response was, "It's broke, ain't it?" A sign on the wall of his shop said, "Labor \$10 an hour, \$20 if you watch, \$30 if you help."

**Keith Nyborg**, an army veteran of the Korean Conflict, filled a mission to Finland for his church, was a guide and interpreter for the United States Rowing Team at the Finnish Olympics, and was the U.S. Ambassador to Finland for five years. He started the Ambassador's Cup Foundation cross-country ski races.

In 1948, **General Leo Hammond** started Ashton's first National Guard unit, the 116th Combat Engineers Company, as a captain in the army reserves. In June 1950, the unit was called up for active duty, and he was sent to Fort Belvoir as a major to train troops until January 1951, when the unit was deployed to Korea. About July 1951, he was transferred to the 73rd Combat Engineer Battalion as a lieutenant colonel. Then in March 1952, he was transferred to the Fort Carson engineer group. He came home in 1952 and organized an engineer group in 1966 in Idaho Falls. He attended Command Staff School and made the rank of general after 24 years of service. He farmed for several years and bought and operated the Ashton Dry Cleaners.

**Lynn Loosli** is a prominent rancher, farmer, and veteran living in Ashton. He served as Idaho state representative for six years and was a member of the prestigious Committee of Nine in the Idaho Water Resources Committee.

**Portia Loosli**, Lynn's wife and mother of nine children, was chosen Idaho's Mother of the Year in 1995 by the American Mothers, Inc.

**Stan Clark** was also a member of the prestigious Committee of Nine in the Idaho Water Resources Committee.

**James Harrell** served in the Marine Corps in World War II, was a longtime insurance and real-estate agent, and was Ashton's mayor from 1971 to 1983.

**Glade Lyon** was manager of Lyon's general merchandise store in Ashton for more than 42 years, was a registered representative selling "penny stocks" for a Salt Lake City brokerage firm, was a real-estate salesman for more than twenty years, was a teacher at North Fremont High School for one year, wrote a book entitled *Idaho's Medal of Honor Recipients* and another, *Our Flag Book* (viewable at [www.ourflag-book.com](http://www.ourflag-book.com), used as a text in the fifth grades of many elementary schools). He was an active member of the American Legion for more than 60 years, including five years on the American Legion National Internal Affairs Commission.

**Calvin Wickham** worked for Fall River Electric for 42 years, serving as general manager his last 12 years there. During World War II, he fought on Iwo Jima and was awarded the Purple Heart for a major chest wound; he is featured in Steve Portella's book *Heroes Among Us* for this experience. For several years he was a leader in the Boy Scouts of America and the 4H. He was called to Washington, D.C., in 1979 to be recognized by the Carter Administration for his work in developing new sources of electrical power. In 1981 he was called to

## *Distinguished Citizens*

testify before Congress regarding the WWPS (Washington Water Power Service) bond default issue and the building of nuclear power plants in the Tri-Cities area of Washington state. Very community minded, he was active in the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, and the American Legion. In his retirement years, he was responsible for the flowers planted on the corner coming into Ashton.

**Alwyn Nedrow**, colorful veteran of World War II, has been recognized in the Eastern Idaho Horseman's Hall of Fame. He has written articles that were published in *Western Horseman* magazine. He is currently working on his memoirs.

**Carol Bessey** was a longtime editor of the *Ashton Herald* newspaper and wrote a book, *Battle of the WAC*, about her World War II experiences.

**Luella Baum** was Idaho state president of the American Legion Auxiliary and in 1947 was the instigator in starting the Girls State Program, of which she was a director. She was very active in the Republican Party, receiving a plaque from District 7 Republican Party for her many years of dedicated service. She served more than four years as president of the Federated Republican Women of Idaho, along with many other such positions.

**Dick Powell** moved to Ashton in 1982 and was followed a year later by his wife, Gayle. Gayle sold cinnamon rolls and other pastries to residents of Ashton and Island Park and was so successful that they opened a "Mrs. Powell's Cinnamon Rolls" store in the Grand Teton Mall in 1984. They ultimately had two company-owned stores and fifty franchisees.

**Jack M. Lyon** served for many years as managing editor of Deseret Book Company in Salt Lake City. He is the proprietor of the Editorium, a small software company, and is the author or compiler of several books, including *Managing the Obvious*. He also owns a publishing business, Waking Lion Press, which produced this book.

**Joanie Nyborg** was chosen Mrs. Idaho 1982–1983. She was the wife of Bruce Nyborg and daughter-in-law of Keith Nyborg, United States Ambassador to Finland, and his wife Raija. In April 1983, she represented Idaho and Ricks College at the Mrs. U.S.A. Pageant in Las Vegas, Nevada.

**Ryan Hamilton** was the winner of the Sierra Mist/Pepsi Cola national contest to choose "America's Next Great Comic."

## PHOTO GALLERY



*This set of two RPPC (Real Photo Post Cards) show a view of Ashton from the west about 1910, not far from where Highway US-20 is today. The two cards can be put together to form a panoramic view. The two have several buildings numbered on the photo side (here removed), and there are descriptions on the postcard side.*



*Starting from left to right (south to north) on both pages in this spread, we see the U.S. Reclamation Service (long, dark building), train cars, the city water tower, a grain elevator, the bank and the hotel (both brick buildings), various buildings, grain elevators, the lumber yard, the red-brick church (with pointed tower), houses and other buildings, and the railroad station (long building).*



*Fishing expedition, about 1910. Handwriting on the photo side of this RPPC (Real Photo Post Card) reads, "94 Trout, Snake River Idaho." The lodgepole pines and general nature of the background may place the photo in Island Park.*





*Stripped-down Model-T Fords ready to race, about 1912. Mr. Paul Stone was a business owner in Ashton for several years. This photo was purchased by the Wickham family in the 1960s at Mr. Stone's estate auction as part of a trunk full of papers, letters, and photos. The photo is probably from about 1912, based on the Model-T Fords, which would have been new enough at the time to draw special attention. Also, some buildings with pitched roofs next to the Wilson Hotel are replaced in a well-dated photo of 1916, indicating that this photo is earlier than 1916.*



*Train depot, about 1925. This photo was obviously taken on the same day as the photo on page 56, as some of the people in the photos are the same. These photos are difficult to date, but judging from the clothing and the truck, the time must be the 1920s.*



*Steam locomotive, 1953. A Union Pacific note reads, "3131 4-6-2 (Alco) at station with NB passenger train #31 (1 coach, 1 baggage car) from Idaho Falls. Ashton, Idaho, July 11, 1953." Note the "W. C. Fields" smoke stack.*



*Billy Waugh and Carl Swanstrum in front of store (American Legion?). According to Bernetta Hanson, the photo dates to 1921. The building to the left is the Cannon Building. In later photos, the doorway seen at the back of the Cannon Building is bricked in, which is important in dating photos.*





*Gertie Williams in the store where she worked as a young woman, probably the clothing store owned by Mr. Fried, in the building that later housed Chadwick's and Stoddard's. The photo can be dated to about 1925 because of the man's straw boater's hat, which went out of fashion later in the 1920s. The women's hats on the display case also appear to belong to the early to mid 1920s.*



*Crowds throng Main Street to watch the Dog Derby in 1935.*



*Skiing at Bear Gulch, 1963: Janean Wickham, Beverly Kandler, Karen Daniels, Janet Cook.*



*Ashton in winter as seen from up in the Ashton Milling & Elevator grain elevator that is on the west side of railroad tracks and on Main Street. The photo can be dated to about 1915, mostly because of the Hobart & Upham sporting-goods store visible in this photo and in other photos of this date. Both earlier and later, this building housed a business other than Hobart & Upham.*





*Main Street at night (looking west), Christmas, about 1950.*



*Main Street (looking east), about 1917. View of a busy day on Main Street, looking east. Since the original Ashton Hotel is still standing, the photo must be prior to 1920. Considering the number of Model-T Fords and the fashions, the photo was probably taken between 1916 and 1919. This is the photograph used on the cover and the title page of this book.*



*Main Street (looking east). The photo can be dated to 1930 by the automobiles. Several appear to be Model-A Fords, which were not manufactured until the late 1920s and were not common until the early 1930s. This is the photograph used on pages 14 and 15 of this book.*



*Main Street, 1936.*



*Main Street, 1950.*







Previous page: *Residents and visitors line Ashton's Main Street (looking east), waiting for the parade on July 4, 2006, during the city's centennial celebration. This photograph was taken by Suzanne Hamilton to coincide with the photograph used on the title page of this book.*



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Glade Lyon loved Ashton and contributed much to the community. He was manager of Lyon's general merchandise store there for more than 42 years, was a registered representative selling "penny stocks" for a Salt Lake City brokerage firm, was a real-estate salesman for more than twenty years, and was a teacher at North Fremont High School for one year. He was also a part owner in the Ashton IGA Store, the Ashton Theater, and other business interests, including Potpourri Ranch. He wrote and published three books, *Idaho's Medal of Honor Recipients*, *Our Flag* (viewable at [www.ourflag-book.com](http://www.ourflag-book.com) and used as a text in the fifth grades of

many elementary schools), and *Ashton, Idaho: The Centennial History*. During World War II, he served in the United States Army in Germany, France, and the Philippines and was part of the occupying U.S. forces in Japan. In 2001 he was given an official commendation by the government of France for his service there. A true patriot, he was an active member of the American Legion for more than 60 years, including five years on the American Legion National Internal Affairs Commission. He enjoyed wearing red-, white-, and blue-striped socks to Ashton's annual Fourth of July parade.

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[www.editorium.com/ashton.htm](http://www.editorium.com/ashton.htm)

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